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Issue No 107
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Police are targeting those people who take part in the illegal sport of hare coursing, where bets are taken on dogs trying to catch wild hares which was banned by the Hunting Act in 2004

EXCLUSIVE

■ BY NICK AMES

A CRACKDOWN on illegal hare coursing and poaching is being launched by police in the Faversham area from tomorrow.

The acts of animal cruelty still take place in remote areas and hundreds of pounds are waged in bets.

But police say they are determined to see an end to the countryside criminal acts and are working with both landowners and those with expert knowledge of the rural area to end the practice.

The operation, which is being run by the Faversham Neighbourhood Team, will continue until January 31 and has two main aims – to reduce crime in the countryside and raise the confidence of people living away from the main towns in the area.

Sergeant Dave Smith, from the neighbourhood team, said although hare coursing was banned by the Hunting Act 2004, it was still taking place in remote areas with hundreds of pounds changing hands as people bet on which dogs, usually lurchers, would be the first to catch a hare.

"Hare coursing tends to start this time of year when the crops have been harvested and we got our first case this year in a field near Doddington earlier this month," said Sgt Smith.

"The people involved in this so-called sport can cause thousands of pounds worth of damage to newly planted crops.

"Hares are often left with broken legs or

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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2 The Dave Lee charity golf day returns to Chart Hills golf club this weekend. **Search 'Dave Lee' @ yourkenttv.co.uk**



3 Enjoy a taste of this year's Eurofair and Kent Food and Drink Festival at Canterbury. **Search 'Eurofair' @ yourkenttv.co.uk**
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'Every time my heart beats, I miss my son'

■ BY TOM BETTS

THE grieving mother of a teenager who died after being hit by a car has described him as a "unique human being".

Christopher Allum, 17, was hit by a black Vauxhall Corsa in Holly Road, Ramsgate, on Saturday, September 19, and died later that day in hospital.

His mother, Zoe Law, from Faversham, said: "Christopher was a unique human being who will be very much missed by us all, and he leaves behind him a massive void that will never be filled."

She and his father George Allum, a police officer based at Margate, added that he was a "very happy" young man who was "always smiling" and "always willing to help other pupils and friends".

Christopher also leaves behind brother Philip and sister Rachel, both 15.

Christopher started his education at St Mary's School, Faversham, and then went on to St Lawrence College, Ramsgate.

His ambition was to become a car designer as cars were his passion. He also liked R'n'B music.

He had passed his driving test, both theory and practical, in just two weeks and was serious enough about his driving to have also completed the Pass Plus scheme.

Zoe said: "Every time my heart beats I miss him. When we feel low he will be there to encourage us, I know."

"We would like to say thank you to the pupils and staff at St Lawrence College for all the care they have given Chris over the years and now for their support of his family."

"Also, thank you to everyone for the fantastic and touching tributes."



MUCH-LOVED: Family and friends have paid warm tributes to Christopher Allum

"I don't think Chris actually realised how much he touched the hearts of so many people. It gives us strength and confirms everything we feel for Christopher. We are so privileged to have been blessed to be the parents of such an amazing, charming and significant boy."

"His brother and sister sorely miss their special big brother and take solace in the fact that he was an inspiration to them."

His father, George, said: "All Chris's family are devastated at his loss. We were all so very proud of the lovely, caring young man Chris was growing into."

"We would like to say thank you to the emergency services and hospital staff and those people in Holly Road who tried to save him. We have been overwhelmed by the sympathy and support shown by friends and colleagues."

An inquest was opened and adjourned into Christopher's death on Tuesday, last week.

Public asked to keep a lookout

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

backs and last year three dogs were abandoned in fields by their owners."

The operation will also target poachers who, by stealing pheasants and other game birds from organised shoots, also prove costly to landowners.

Officers will be working with both farmers and gamekeepers to build intelligence about offenders.

They are also appealing to the public to report any coursing or poaching taking place in their area.

Sgt Smith said: "Both poaching and hare coursing are often linked to other kinds of rural crime. Last year we seized three vehicles and three men were arrested for stealing diesel from tractors. We recovered stolen farm machinery and a man was arrested for a burglary at Throwley."

"Intelligence gathered from the operation also led to the discovery of two cannabis factories in Newnham and Throwley Forstal earlier this year."

Anyone with information about rural crime should contact the Faversham Neighbourhood Team on 07980 683726.

Town's loyalty card is a hit with residents

MORE than 1,000 loyalty cards promoting businesses in Faversham have been sold in just two months.

The scheme, set up in July, gives shoppers points for using stores and other outlets in the town.

Vouchers are offered when a certain total is reached and these can be redeemed at participating businesses.

A total of 18 companies are involved in the plan, which is the first of its kind in Kent.

The Faversham Enterprise Partnership said reaction from shoppers has been extremely positive.

Supermarket plans to create 300 new jobs

SUPERMARKET giant Sainsbury's has said it intends to move into Faversham, creating up to 300 jobs.

The £18 million investment would see a supermarket constructed on a vacant site at Bysing Wood, which the company already owns. The site was originally earmarked for a DIY store.

Planning permission must now be sought from Swale council for the modified scheme, which the supermarket giant is set to explain to residents at a series of seminars.



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Island set for bright future, says minister

■ BY NICK AMES

THE Isle of Sheppey is set to forge ahead in prosperity when the global recession recedes, according to a leading Government minister.

Shahid Malik MP, Under Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, visited the island last week in order to see the first stages of the planned regeneration of the area.

He was in the Queenborough and Rushenden area where a long-awaited road is under construction, 2,000 new homes are set to be built and jobs created by the construction of a super-market distribution centre.

The plans are being overseen by the South East England Development Agency, but are also backed by the private sector and local and national government.

Mr Malik said: "The Isle of Sheppey is extremely well placed in the long term, and once we see the global downturn in the economy evaporate, the area will really be able to take advantage.

"The regeneration which is currently taking place will be of great benefit to the area and the people who live here in the coming years."

Among the projects in place are the construction of the Rushenden Relief Road – which has been called for by locals for 30 years.

The supermarket chain Aldi say about 250 new jobs will be created by a major distribution centre at Neats Court, while property company Amicus Horizon say up to 300 new jobs will be created when they open a new centre.



HANDS-ON: Under Secretary of State Shahid Malik gets behind the wheel of a digger on his tour of Sheppey

Mr Malik also had a go at driving a digger and was shown some boxing moves at a community centre.

He said the regeneration projects were an example to the UK on how to take the right approach.

"In some cases regeneration projects are planned in an office and no-one has too much confidence in them," he said. "But here the process has been different. Locals have been involved from the start and can now see their fingerprints on the blueprint for the future."

"When details of a meeting about the area's future were released, about 1,000 people got involved. It says much for the area that the level of interest and commitment was so high."

"What we are seeing here is a great example of how the public and private sectors, and local and national government, can work together."

Last week Yoursware revealed plans to vastly increase the size and capacity of the Port of Sheerness.

Mr Malik said: "If people believe in the future they can succeed."



Lifetime ban for breeder who mistreated dogs

A DOG breeder whose animals were discovered being kept in poor conditions has been given a lifetime ban.

Melanie King, 55, of Whents Farm, Lower Road, Teynham, pleaded guilty to charges of mistreatment and was given an 18-month community order, ordered to do 150 hours of unpaid work and pay £1,100 in costs for breaching the conditions of a licence issued to her for the keeping of a breeding establishment.

She was also disqualified for life from keeping a dog breeding establishment.

The court was shown pictures of the bad conditions the dogs were kept in as King was sentenced at Sittingbourne Magistrates Court in relation to 24 offences under the Breeding of Dogs Act 1973. One of the pictures is shown above.

In December 2008, an inspection of the premises by a vet raised serious concerns about breeding conditions. A temporary licence was issued to enable King to deal with the problems.

In February and March this year, Swale council officers attended her farm together with the police and the RSPCA, they witnessed numerous breaches of the licence conditions.

In sentencing, the bench told King that had she failed to plea guilty at an early stage, they would have imposed a custodial sentence.

Anti-social bikers 'won't be tolerated'

POLICE have warned riders of nuisance off-road bikes that their actions will not be tolerated.

An operation to tackle the anti-social use of trials bikes and quad bikes across Swale this summer has now ended, but Sgt Dave Smith, of the Faversham Rural Neighbourhood Team, stressed this week that officers would continue to take action.

Abbeyfields and Goldfinch Close, in Faversham, were among six areas targeted in the operation.

Illegal

An off-road motorbike was seized in Boughton earlier this month for having no insurance, and the rider of a quad bike on land at Teynham was given a warning by police.

Sgt Smith said: "Just because the operation is over doesn't mean we won't continue to issue warnings and seize illegal bikes."

"These bikes have a detrimental impact on people's quality of life, and often the riders are untrained and their bikes are not insured, taxed or MOT-ed," he said.

The public can report nuisance off-road vehicles by emailing offroadbikes.midkent@kent.pnn.police.uk.

Cancer survivor is guest at service to thank volunteers

A FOUR-time cancer survivor from Faversham will be the guest of honour at a service at Canterbury Cathedral this weekend.

David Iron will be guest speaker at the event, where a 'thousand words of thanks' will be said for the volunteers and supporters who make the life-saving work of Cancer Research UK possible.

Mr Iron, 55, a financing advisor to the Government on space projects, has survived cancer an incredible four times and undergone 16 years of treatment.

He has been treated for skin cancer, non-Hodgkins lymphoma, colon and liver cancer and at one point thought he might not live to see his twins, Freddie and Rosie grow up.

However, they are both now at university and Mr Iron is well once again.

He said: "Operations have their ups and downs, physically and emotionally, but psychologically, getting the news of a new cancer is the Big Event."

"The first time is a proverbial bolt from the blue; the second another deep shock. The third is yet another nauseating low point."

"When you get to your fourth, you feel like looking up, shaking your fist and saying 'What do you think you're playing at?'"

The Canterbury Thanksgiving Service for Cancer Research UK on Saturday is an opportunity to thank the people of Kent for the generous and unstinting support that underpins the charity.

Leading the tributes will be Princess Alexandra, the Lord Mayor of Canterbury, Cllr Dr Harry Cragg and the High Sheriff of Kent, Jane Rogers, along with the chief executive of Cancer Research UK, Harpal Kumar, and the charity's chairman, David Newbigging.

Up to 1,000 people will attend the free but ticketed event. Among them will be volunteers who have served in Cancer Research UK shops or on fundraising community groups for more than 40 years.



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NEWS IN BRIEF

Council's new chief tours wards to hear your views

SWALE council's chief executive Abdool Kara has started a series of tours of the borough, in which he hopes to visit every ward.

His first outing was to Sittingbourne's Roman ward, where Cllr Mike Haywood showed him around East Street, where residents want £20,000 worth of upgrading and regeneration to take place.

Mr Kara was then shown countryside around Longridge where locals are protesting about plans for a housing development.

Mystery of runner found dead on waste land

POLICE are still trying to identify a dead runner found on waste land in Sittingbourne two weeks ago.

The man, wearing a white vest and running shorts, and red and white trainers, was found in an area between Staplehurst Road and Sonora Fields at about 10pm on Wednesday, September 16.

Police have ruled out any suspicious circumstances. Anyone with information should call police on 01795 477055.

Smurfs stop for a drink on cycle trip to Bruges

A GROUP of cyclists dressed as cartoon characters The Smurfs stopped off to rest their legs and get a spot of lunch at The Tudor Rose in Borden.

They formed part of a team of 70 bikers who were taking part in a 250-mile charity bike ride from London to Bruges in Belgium to raise money for Demelza House children's hospice and the Get Kids Going appeal, which gives children with disabilities the opportunity to take part in sports.

Carnival gathers courts from across the country

A TOTAL of 20 carnival courts will appear at Faversham Carnival next month.

A court from Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire will make the longest journey, while towns across Kent will be well represented at the event, which is one of the largest and most popular of its kind held in the county.

Scarlett Mann and her court represent Faversham at the carnival, which has been running for 130 years, and was the subject of an exhibition at the Fleur de Lis Centre.

Pub's green ways are an inspiration

A 16th CENTURY pub was toasting its success after being named the Kent Environment Business of the Year 2009.

The Rose & Crown in Selling, near Faversham, beat off stiff competition to land the award at the Environment Awards for Kent Business ceremony, at Port Lympne Wild Animal Park on Thursday.

The judges were particularly impressed with the way the owners encouraged other local businesses to be as sustainable as the pub.

During the past two years, staff at the Rose & Crown have reduced waste by 70 per cent, which means that 80,000 litres of waste has been recycled rather than going to landfill.

Electricity usage has been reduced by 19.2 per cent, a saving of nine tonnes of carbon, and by including green alternatives in the business plan, gross profit margins have increased six to nine per cent year-on-year.

Tim Robinson, owner of the Rose & Crown, said: "It is fantastic that all of our efforts are of a high enough standard to be recognised; it is

■ BY JON COATES

something we are very proud of. It shows that no matter how big or small you are, your actions count and are appreciated."

Presenting the award, Nick Chard, Kent County Council cabinet member for environment, highways and waste, said: "It is important as we come out of recession that we celebrate the achievements of Kent businesses."

"This year we have had some outstanding entries. It is equally important to highlight environmental best practice as a way of achieving efficiency and savings."

Five themed winners were chosen from a shortlist of 12. Awards were given to: Maidstone Leisure Centre (for environmental engagement), Ashford-based GSE Haulage (for innovative partnerships); H+H UK, based in Borough Green (for achievements in resource efficiency), Dover-based John Shirley Ltd (for commitment to the environment); and Tunbridge Wells-based Real Hair & Beauty (for sustainable business management).

Alex Green, sustainable business pro-



WINNING WAYS: Green practices have reduced waste and increased profits at the Rose and Crown in Selling

gramme manager at Kent County Council, organisers of the awards, said: "This year we have seen a diverse range of businesses entering the awards and have been particularly impressed with the standard of entries."

"This was the first new-look ceremony, which means that although there are fewer awards, we are placing more value on each of them."

The evening was hosted by former BBC South East Today presenter Geoff Clark, making his first public appearance since leaving the corporation the week before last, a month before his contract expired.



DEDICATION: Wendy with Andrew Boswell, colleague Karen Dendor, and branch manager Laura Turner

Wendy celebrates clean record

A CELEBRATION was held to mark a dry-cleaner's 40 years of service.

Wendy Ralph has worked at Johnson Cleaners in Sittingbourne High Street for four decades.

The 65-year-old general assistant, from Sittingbourne, was presented with a bouquet of flowers and a gift from the company by regional manager Andrew Boswell and her branch manager Laura Turner on Friday.

Ms Turner said: "Wendy is the life and soul here and all our customers love her. We are very grateful to her for all her dedication and hard work during the last 40 years."

"It's a great pleasure to work with such a won-

derful woman and I hope she will be with us for many years to come."

Mrs Ralph joined the company in 1969. She lives in the town with her husband and has two grown-up sons.

Her role involves overseeing the quality of all cleaning, stain removal and pressing in store, ensuring that the highest standards are met and all work is completed on time.

During the last 40 years she said she has witnessed many changes in the dry-cleaning industry, including the introduction of new equipment and cleaning methods, and improvements to team-working methods and training provision.



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RISKING LIVES: Only 25 per cent of drivers say they wouldn't use their mobile phone while driving

Police cracking down on drivers who use phones

A MAJOR police operation is being launched tomorrow which will crack down on drivers using mobile phones at the wheel.

The two-month blitz, which will run throughout Swale, will focus on the illegal use of mobile phones, and drivers and passengers who don't wear seatbelts.

October will see also officers concentrating on the use of seatbelts. Traffic officer for Mid Kent, PC Warren Jarvis, said anyone breaking the law would be stopped and fined.

He said: "Recently, the fixed penalty fines for people not wearing seatbelts doubled from £30 to £60.

"Of the 2,538 people killed on our roads last year, about 500 could have been saved if they had been wearing seatbelts, yet some continue to flout the law even though it only takes a second to belt up.

"We get all sorts of weird and wonderful excuses, like the belt won't fit over someone's dress, or it'll crease their shirt.

"Some drivers want to show how tough they are by not wearing their seatbelt. They don't seem to realise that they are putting

■ BY NICK AMES

their own and their passengers' lives at risk."

In November the focus will be on people using mobile phones while behind the wheel.

PC Jarvis said: "Earlier this year we ran an operation to target mobile phone use and issued 112 fixed penalty tickets, which shows that people are still flouting the rules."

Officers can give drivers with a £60 fixed penalty ticket and three points on their licence if they are seen talking on the phone or texting while driving.

"You are four times more likely to have an accident while using the phone while driving, yet only 25 per cent of drivers say they would not use a phone and drive," said PC Jarvis.

Officers in Mid Kent will use a variety of ways to enforce the crackdown, including uniformed patrols and high visibility road checks.

They are also urging anyone with any concerns about road safety to email them at roads.policing.midkent@kent.pnn.police.uk.

PC Jarvis said: "If we can stop even one person from being killed or seriously injured the operation will have been a success."

Appeal for witnesses to horse theft



POLICE are appealing for information to help them to find a horse stolen from a field on Sheppey.

The mare called Shanty, pictured left, is four years old and 13.2 hands tall. She is a black Welsh cob, with a white blaze on her face and two white feet on her hind legs.

It is believed she was taken from the field off Edenbridge Drive, Sheerness, between 8pm on September 16 and 11am the following day.

A police spokesman said: "We are appealing to find this

horse so it can be reunited with its owner and are concerned it may be sold on.

"If anyone recognises the horse I would urge them to contact us on 01795 419182 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

"Furthermore, should anyone be offered a horse for sale I would urge the buyer to ensure it is scanned, as this horse has been micro-chipped.

"The passport that will come with the pony is also no longer valid."

yoursware

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cash point attack warning

POLICE are urging people to be extra vigilant around cash machines after £250 was stolen from an ATM in Sittingbourne.

The theft took place at the Abbey National cash machine in Sittingbourne High Street at about 2pm on Friday, September 18.

An elderly woman using the ATM was approached by a man and a girl aged about 14 or 15. The girl asked the woman for money in a foreign accent while the man covered the screen and buttons of the ATM with a newspaper, during which time £250 was withdrawn from her account.

Police are linking the theft to an incident at an ATM at Tesco in Bridge Road, Sheerness, about an hour later. A woman using the cash machine was approached by two youths who ran off when she shouted at them.

Anyone with information should call Det Con Alan Beesley on 01795 419349 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555111.

Car wash workers raided

IMMIGRATION officers swooped on a car wash site in the car park next to a Sittingbourne supermarket in a crackdown on illegal foreign workers.

The swoop at Sainsbury in Roman Square was part of a series of raids across Kent. Also targeted were Tesco in Courtney Road, Gillingham, Tesco in Tenterden and branches of Sainsbury and Tesco in Ashford.

In total 21 people were detained by officers.

Head investigator Carla Johnson said: "These arrests show our commitment to targeting those who work illegally."

Island firm to cut 60 jobs

SIXTY jobs are to go at HBC Engineering Solutions, based in Powerstation Road, Halfway, on Sheppey, in the run up to Christmas.

The company, which is concerned with plastic injection moulding, says it is experiencing problems with one of its major customers.

Wiedmuller, a German-based electrical components manufacturer, has said that work done by HBC will now be taken on by the company's own employees in order to protect their jobs.

HBC said it is hoping that its business will grow again in the new year.

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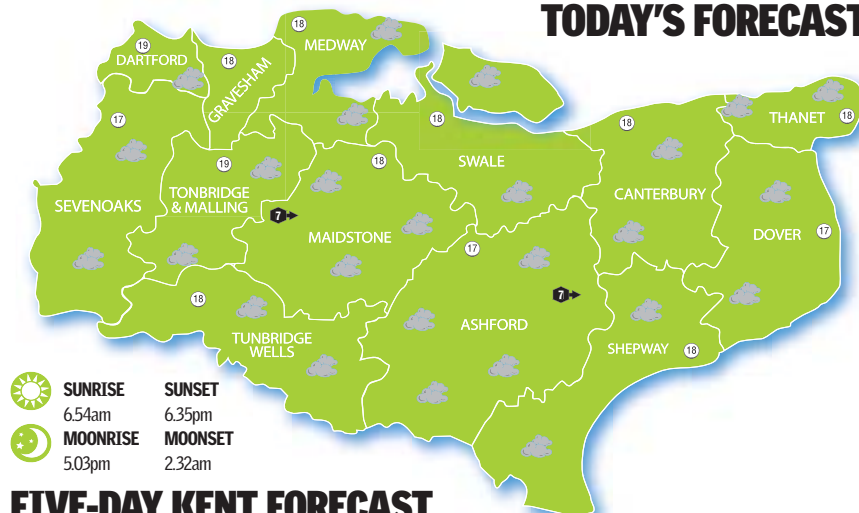
WEEKEND HIGH TIDES

Chatham	Saturday	1:03pm	5.8m
	Sunday	1:35pm	6.0m
Dover	Saturday	11:18am	6.4m
	Sunday	11:46am	6.6m
Dungeness	Saturday	11:22am	7.4m
	Sunday	11:54am	7.7m
Ramsgate	Saturday	11:48am	4.9m
	Sunday	12:16pm	5.0m
Sheerness	Saturday	12:52pm	5.6m
	Sunday	1:25pm	5.7m
Whitstable	Saturday	12:51pm	5.2m
	Sunday	1:24pm	5.2m



AROUND THE WORLD YESTERDAY

Amsterdam	18°C	Madrid	24°C
Athens	23°C	New York	18°C
Barcelona	24°C	Paris	21°C
Beijing	24°C	Rome	26°C
Bombay	30°C	Sydney	20°C
Cape Town	18°C	Tenerife	23°C
Cardiff	17°C	Tokyo	26°C
Gibraltar	23°C	Vancouver	14°C
Hong Kong	26°C	Warsaw	20°C
Las Palmas	28°C	Wellington	13°C



SUNRISE 6:54am
MOONRISE 5:03pm
SUNSET 6:35pm
MOONSET 2:32am

FIVE-DAY KENT FORECAST

	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon		Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
Ashford	19°C	18°C	16°C	17°C	17°C	Gravesend	20°C	19°C	17°C	17°C	17°C
Canterbury	18°C	18°C	15°C	16°C	17°C	Maidstone	19°C	19°C	16°C	17°C	17°C
Chatham	18°C	18°C	16°C	16°C	17°C	Ramsgate	18°C	18°C	15°C	16°C	17°C
Dartford	20°C	19°C	17°C	17°C	17°C	Rochester	18°C	18°C	16°C	16°C	17°C
Dover	17°C	17°C	15°C	15°C	17°C	Sevenoaks	17°C	17°C	15°C	15°C	15°C
Faversham	18°C	18°C	16°C	16°C	17°C	Sittingbourne	18°C	18°C	16°C	16°C	17°C
Folkestone	17°C	17°C	15°C	15°C	17°C	Tonbridge	19°C	18°C	16°C	15°C	15°C
Gillingham	18°C	18°C	16°C	16°C	17°C	Tun Wells	19°C	18°C	16°C	15°C	15°C

Taking an interest in budding young artists

TORY hopeful Gordon Henderson will be helping to launch the 2010 Swale Arts Forum Bursary Award.

The bursary will be awarded for creative writing at a ceremony in February next year.

In previous years the bursary has been awarded to talented Swale youngsters James

Allchin for visual arts in 2008 and Jamie Evenden for performing arts this year.

The launch of the £700 bursary will take place at the Ship On Shore public house in Marine Parade, Sheerness, on Thursday, October 8.

Members of the public who are interested in the arts are invited to attend, including any creative writers from the Swale area who might like to enter the competition.

During the evening local writers, including members of the Sheppey Writers Group and Island Artists, will be doing readings.

Sittingbourne and Sheppey parliamentary candidate Mr Henderson, who is an active supporter of the Swale Arts Forum and has helped sponsor the bursary since its inauguration, has agreed to read some of his own work.

He said: "I am delighted to help sponsor the Swale Arts Forum Bursary Award again this year. The Forum is doing excellent work promoting the arts in our area and it is good to see them encouraging people to realise their talent."



SUPPORT: Gordon Henderson is a supporter of the forum and will give a reading on the night

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QUESTION & ANSWER

PETER BULL



Q How did you become involved in Channel 4's series *How the Other Half Live*?

A Since I was named entrepreneur of the year by Ernst and Young in 2007, I have had various television channels calling me to try and get me to do different shows, but when Channel 4 called and told me about this one it was really something I could associate with and wanted to be involved in. I know what it's like to have money troubles and grow up on a council estate so when they said about the show, I knew it was something I could get stuck in to.

Q Your family was paired up with the Cuthberts as a potential family to sponsor; what was it about them that stood out to you?

A One of the main things that I liked about the Cuthbert family was how they worked in their family circle, plus they were facing eviction when I first met them and I wanted to do something to help. I could relate to them as I remember when I was growing up in south London, I used to have to hide behind the sofa with my mum from the debt collectors and rent man, so I know what it's like to be in that position. I also saw a lot of myself in young Sam, (aged 11) who has a paper round at an early age, like I did, and is a bit of an artful dodger type character.

Q You gave the Cuthbert family more than £4,000, a new life in the countryside, and offered to pay for Jimmy and Toni's wedding, as well as giving Jimmy a job at one of your

caravan parks - did you ever expect that you would help to that extent?

A I wasn't too sure what to expect, but without sounding condescending to the other episodes in the series, I didn't want to give the family a new plasma television or laptop, I wanted to help them get somewhere and get them to sign up for a change. They showed me that they wanted to change and get out of London, so I gave them a helping hand.

Q How would you say your help has changed the Cuthbert family?

A They are doing really well in their new life and Jimmy loves his new job as a security warden at one of my caravan parks in Felixstowe. Sam is still the same and has started his own business at the caravan park, offering to walk dogs. He is a character and I think he has a good future ahead of him, he's a hard worker. They still have money worries but don't we all, but they know I'm here if they need any advice. As for the wedding, we have offered to have it at the Hop Farm in February next year and I'm planning on making it a big event.

Q What is your relationship with the family now?

A We still keep in touch and they have my number. I wouldn't say we are best mates but we have expanded our circle of friends and they are lovely people, let's just say they are on our Christmas list now.

Q How has the experience affected you and your family?

A My wife Julie and I know that kind of life so we weren't too phased when we went to visit them in north London. To be honest, it went straight over my daughter Masie's head, who is eight, but Rosie, who is 11, went very quiet and was quite shocked. I'm glad that they got to see that way of life so they can appreciate what they have and realise you have to work for it. My saying has always been you shouldn't be embarrassed of where your roots are or if you asked for help, like I did, and be proud of where you have come from.

Q What reactions have you had from other people?

A We have received some really lovely and positive comments, especially from people on the Channel 4 website. A lot of people have left things on the site which are really heart-warming.

Q Would you do anything like this again?

A I really enjoyed it and I think the whole family did, so I would do it again, definitely. I wanted to do it as the situation was something I could relate to and it was just a nice thing to do. I have always said if I help someone, then someone else will help me along the way, and I truly believe that.

Q & A

The self-made millionaire and owner of the Hop Farm Family Park spoke to **Anna White** about his appearance on the TV documentary series *How the Other Half Live*, in which he helped a struggling family start a new life

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Technology is saving the tomb of the Black Prince. Search 'prince'

EDITOR'S CHOICE

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Former addict has turned his life around and is helping others trapped by drugs 'If I can keep one person out of prison, it will be worth it'

Drug addiction's link to crimes committed to pay for the habit is well known. Darren Dilloway has served time in prison for drug offences but now works with the police and drug agencies to help people trapped by addiction. As part of our A Safer Kent campaign, taking a behind the scenes look at the work of Kent Police, **TOM BETTS** meets a man who has been on both sides of the system



TURNING your life around when you are fighting a £100-a-day drug habit is no easy task, but Darren Dilloway is living proof that it can be done.

At the peak of his addiction, Darren was living in a nightmare, flitting between prison and hostels, with a spate of convictions, heroin overdoses and near-death experiences under his belt.

He was losing the battle and thinks would be dead by now if he hadn't finally decided to try and escape and salvage something from life. He said: "At one point I would honestly rather have been in prison than free. You get three meals a day, have no bills to pay and are looked after in way."

Darren, 34, grew up in the Medway towns of Gillingham and Chatham and found himself in trouble with the police in his early teens.

He dabbled with drugs such as cannabis, ecstasy, cocaine and LSD, before an addiction to speed got the better of him and he started stealing to pay for his habit.

Skipping school, unemployment, hanging around aimlessly and car crime became the norm and he soon found himself inside, where he first took heroin.

"Many people start to do it when they go inside as a 'bird-killer', to pass the time quicker, and when I got out I realised I was addicted," he said.

Years of addiction followed, with crack joining heroin on his daily wish list.

He said: "All that interested me each day was getting money to buy drugs, taking drugs and everything that went with it. I knew the risks but still I'd have tried anything. I was stuck in a vicious circle."

Talking about his crimes, he said: "The worst thing I've done is street robberies and burglaries."

"At one point I wouldn't think anything of breaking into four or five houses a day at the peak of my addiction. It didn't occur to me that there were victims, you don't really think like that."

However, after he last came out of prison, for a garage robbery, Darren decided he had to make a change.



DARREN DILLOWAY: 'I was stuck in a vicious circle'

He said: "It had got to the point where I was sick of it. I decided I could beat it but even now it's an ongoing thing. I know that I could walk out of here and have the drugs I wanted in my

hand in an hour, it's that easy. I have to take each day as it comes."

Making the break with his old life and many old friends and acquaintances was part of the process. "I have had to take myself away from my old life, and isolate myself from a lot of people," he said.

Darren has been clean for 18 months and has carved himself a new life. He has successfully completed a rehabilitation requirement and day programme and is facing the future with a renewed sense of hope.

Now he is volunteering and helping others with their drug problems and has managed to get himself a flat in Gillingham to start a new life.

Support

Eventually he hopes to get a job as a drug support worker, helping young people understand what a life as a drug addict can be like.

He said: "I want my story to be out there as it can show people they can turn their lives around."

"It's hard and you have to be ready and stable in life, but it is possible. If I can keep one person out of prison it will have been worth it."

Chief Superintendent Steve Corbishley, who is in charge of the Medway area for Kent Police, arrested Darren when he was causing trouble and has seen him start to turn his life around.

"I am delighted Darren is helping stop others turning to crime," said Chief Supt Corbishley.

"He can talk to offenders and potential offenders in language they understand, and get across the message that crime really does not pay."

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SmartWater will trap flytippers

■ BY ANNA WHITE

KENT has become the first county in the UK to use a hi-tech forensic marker spray to catch and deter flytippers.

SmartWater is a permanent and invisible marking tool that is mainly used to protect property, but Clean Kent has now become the first agency to use the tool in this innovative way.

The Clean Kent campaign is a multi-agency project led by Kent County Council in partnership with district and borough councils, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, the Crown Prosecution Service, the Highways Agency and the Environmental Agency.

With help from former BBC TV Watchdog presenter Nicky Campbell, who now presents the breakfast show on Radio 5, the agencies demonstrated at Maidstone Studios how SmartWater will play a crucial part in the ongoing campaign to crack down on flytipping in Kent.

Residents will be able to spray SmartWater on household waste before it is disposed of. If it is then found illegally dumped, officers can detect SmartWater using ultraviolet light and trace it back to the trader responsible.

The invisible coding spray will remain on any object permanently, even if it is burnt, making it possible to trace the waste back to



SMART MOVE: (From left) Clean Kent co-ordinator Melanie Price, Nicky Campbell, Kent Fire and Rescue Service assistant director of community safety Steve Griffiths, and SmartWater chief executive Phil Cleary

flytippers trying to cover their tracks.

Clean Kent co-ordinator at KCC, Melanie Price, said: "SmartWater has been used throughout the country, and globally, to mark property, but we have been innovative enough to come up with this unique way of using it to deter flytipping."

"Because it is invisible there is no way a trader could know if they are dumping unmarked waste illegally or marked waste. We are hoping the risk will deter them and reduce flytipping in Kent."

SmartWater chief executive Phil Cleary, whose brother invented the product, said: "The



BRIGHT IDEA: SmartWater shows up under UV light

use of SmartWater will help reinforce the message to criminals that Kent is now a no-go zone for flytippers. Through SmartWater, Clean Kent will have the technology to pursue convictions and will actively do so.

"SmartWater maintains a 100 per cent conviction rate when used as evidence in court, which will send a strong message to anyone considering flytipping."

The scheme is being piloted in the Swale and Sevenoaks areas first, before it is rolled out to the rest of Kent.

People found guilty of fly-tipping can face prison sentences of up to five years or a maximum fine of £50,000.

Railway offer 'staycationers' ride to rescue

TOURISM bosses have revealed a 14 per cent increase in the number of visitors to the Garden of England so far this year.

Visit Kent said families had been flocking to attractions such as Leeds Castle and Howlets and Port Lympne wild animal parks after a summer promotion in conjunction with train company Southeastern.

Figures from the tourism partnership show that 2,534,491 visitors came to Kent between January and July this year, compared with 2,227,083 in 2008.

The 2FOR1 promotion, which is continuing until March 2010, is available at more than 70 attractions, hotels and restaurants across Kent. Visitors have to present a valid rail ticket from anywhere in Southeastern's network along with a voucher downloaded from the campaign's website or from promotional brochures at railway stations.

More than 3,000 vouchers have been downloaded and it is hoped at least 5,000 will be redeemed before the end of the promotion.

Sandra Matthews-Marsh, chief executive

of Visit Kent, said: "People are looking for value for money and a good deal and this offer represents that. They are top attractions in Kent – restaurants, hotels, places to visit – so it's a very compelling offer. We are convinced this campaign has made a contribution to the positive picture."

The top three downloads include Leeds Castle, Howlets and Port Lympne and Dover Castle. For more information and a full list of the attractions and destinations included in the offer, go to www.visitkentbytrain.co.uk.

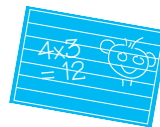


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BREAK TIME



BY THE LEFT: Major Briant (left) with James Bonney, Christian Collins and Sam Brenchley

Do your best, major urges Borden boys

BORDEN Grammar pupils celebrated their success over the last year with a prizegiving evening at Wyvern Hall, Sittingbourne.

One hundred boys collected prizes rewarding academic achievement, progress and service to the school, as well as sporting prowess.

The prizes were presented by Borden old boy Major Michael Briant, whose inspirational speech gave the audience an insight into life in the Army and the values of service, integrity and loyalty.

He encouraged pupils to be themselves while aiming to achieve the best they can.

Maj Briant joined Borden in 1989 and subsequently attended Wellbeck College and Sandhurst. He was commissioned in 1995 and served in Cyprus, Bosnia and Iraq with 39 Regiment Royal Artillery.

Headteacher Harold Vafeas commended the efforts of staff and boys over the past year. The event was overseen by chairman of governors Phil Bromwich and the vote of thanks given by school captain James Bonney.

The Mayor and Mayoress of Swale, staff, governors, parents and pupils also enjoyed a musical interlude led by head of music Paul Ingleton.

Lads steeled for the task with campus agreement

■ BY NICK AMES

A STEEL manufacturer has enlisted MidKent College to train 21 of its apprentices in the skills of production and engineering.

Thamesteel, based in Sheerness, launched a new apprentice training scheme at the beginning of this month.

"We're hoping to employ ten new apprentices each year as part of the scheme", said the company's training manager Gerald Tingley.

"We recognise that young people are an intrinsic part of the future of Thamesteel, so it's brilliant to be able to offer them such a great training opportunity.

"We're excited about taking full advantage of MidKent College's impressive new Medway Campus in Gillingham and looking forward to developing a close partnership with the college.

"Although this is a relatively new partnership for us, I'm sure it is going to be a fruitful one."

From September, MidKent College's business development unit took over responsibility for the training of all Thamesteel employees currently completing an apprenticeship in production and engineering.

Thamessteel is one of the most important employers on Sheppey and has a long history of operating in the area.

It was formed when Sheerness Iron and Steel Company was incorporated in 1966, but it took until the end of that decade and the



PARTNERSHIP: Apprentices watch Thamesteel's Gerald Tingley seal the deal with Jacqui Brown of MidKent College

involvement of Canada's Co-steel International to establish the UK's first small mill which was able to roll its first steel bars in January 1972.

The company's website explains how it has progressed: "Through the next three decades a combination of professional training for all employees, technical innovation, the enthusiasm and commitment of staff, and controlled attention to quality and customer service, enabled the company to push the boundaries

of mini-mill technology.

"From the capability of producing reinforcing steels only, a product range was developed to encompass forging steels for automotive components, high carbon and micro-alloyed steels for high-speed wire drawing and a range of structural sections.

"Substantial investments have been made in the subsequent years to rejuvenate the manufacturing capability, and continue the tradition of supplying quality steels from this site."

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yourswaleblogger

Gary Wright asks why waste time considering a law that will always blame drivers in collisions with bicycles?



Surely cyclists are the worst example of green arrogance

THE cyclist may just be the best example yet of that self-righteous arrogance that has spoiled Britain over the past 20 years.

I tended to believe that the militant anti-smoker represented all that was worst about this country.

And be clear here, I mean the irritating, supercilious ANTI-smoker as opposed to the far less dangerous NON-smoker, who accepts that people have different ways to live their lives and that compromise is one of the best attributes a person can possess.

That holier-than-thou mentality runs so deep in these people that I have discovered over the years that the ANTI-smoker normally has a string of other unreasonable intolerances that mean he, or she, is not a person with whom I will choose to spend my free time.

They represent the worst of PC Britain and those people like fundamental Christians (well fundamental anyone really) who simply

believe they are right because it's too difficult to reconsider or admit you're wrong (anyone who took huge, spiteful delight in the law against smoking in public places).

But the militant bicyclist has come up on the outside and is now proving to be the most dangerous green Nazi in existence.

We have spent millions of pounds in local taxes and Lotto grants to build them a network of cycle paths across our fair isle.

But that's not good enough. Now Cycling England – an agency we fund through the Transport Department – wants the civil law to be changed so that drivers are automatically liable in the event of a crash. No matter who is at fault.

So the Lycra Louts – who ride like they own the road, ignoring traffic lights and using the pavement when it suits them, especially in big cities – will have even less reason to be careful.

They'll be secure in the knowledge that when they do smash head-on into a truck as they go the wrong way down a one-way street (which is another change in the law being con-

sidered), while they are recovering in hospital, at my expense, they will also know that compensation will be on its way from Mr Truck driver who is automatically to blame.

Surely this is madness.

Cyclists are at best a bunch of well-meaning folk who think that a mode of transport invented in the 19th century has a place on our busy 21st century roads. Incorrect.

At worst they are hoodlums who disregard the Highway Code believing they have the moral high ground because they are not polluting our planet.

Witness the ridiculous anger they've shown over Boris Johnson's sensible plan to open bus lanes to commuters on scooters and motorcycles. Absolute common sense and yet they have protested with an anger not seen since the last anti-foxhunt protest outside Parliament.

When cyclists start paying road tax (or VED for the picky) and have to pay insurance, then they deserve a voice, until then, ignore them and tell them to use the cycle lanes we have built for them.

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WIN! a slow cooker and hamper

AS British summer time comes to an end and the temperature plummets, it seems that the only perk we have to look forward to is

an extra hour in bed.

In a bid to help banish these winter blues, Maille, France's leading mustard producer, and quality cookware specialists – Cuisinart, have teamed

up to offer Yourlocal readers a delicious treat to brighten up those gloomy evenings.

One lucky reader has the chance to win a premium 6.5 Litre Cuisinart Cook & Hold Slow Cooker and a luxury hamper, which includes the complete range of Maille mustards and sauces. Three runners up will also win a Maille hamper packed full of fantastic goodies.

Cuisinart Cook & Hold Slow Cookers, which have a five year guarantee, are perfect for making a variety of delicious winter warmer meals such as stews and pot roasts. Prepare your main dish in the morning and return home from a hard day's work to a delicious meal. What's more, winning readers can have fun with the entire Maille range whatever they may be cooking – just a few spoons of Maille Dijon Mustard really adds a fantastic depth of flavour to many dishes and recipes.

To enter, simply answer the question below and send your entry on a postcard along with your email address (if applicable), name, address, and daytime telephone number to Cuisinart Competition, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR. The closing date is October 10, 2009.

Question: Who is France's leading mustard producer?

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TALK TIME

ADRIAN CROWTHER

The Mayor of Swale has a keen interest in local history and attended the unveiling of artefacts discovered during work on the site of a new pub in Sittingbourne



Do you think the Anglo-Saxon relics found will boost the town's tourism?

Yes, they are really excellent finds. A lot of people in Swale, and Sittingbourne in particular, say that we don't have a great deal to offer, so this is something we can all point to as being of great interest indeed.

They will also be a great boost to tourism for the whole area, which will be of benefit to everyone.

Do you think it's unusual for them to have been found so close to the town centre?

Well, there have been finds made in other towns under shopping centres and close to the town centres.

They take place when work is being done and ground is uncovered, so maybe it's not as unusual as all that.

The way they are being preserved - in full public view - is quite innovative.

Yes, that's true. It's great that local people can get involved with what is going on and help preserve and look after the finds in such a practical way.

Listen to the full interview with Cllr Crowther and learn more about how the relics were discovered and are being preserved by watching a video clip at www.yourkenttv.co.uk Search 'burial'.

YOUR LETTERS



Cyclists should get back on the road

For more than 15 years I've been complaining about cyclists riding on the pavement, but over the years I've given up telling them to get off it.

Why do they ride on the pavement and ignore most of the traffic laws? It seems once somebody mounts a bicycle they become a rebel to the establishment.

Their main excuse is that the roads are too dangerous and pavements are safer. For whom? Certainly not the pedestrian.

I said years ago that people would be injured by these cyclists.

There have been reports of fatalities and in the national papers last week there was the court sentencing of a 36-year-old man for knocking down and killing a 17-year-old girl as she came out of a supermarket in Buckinghamshire.

He got just a £2,200 fine, as the maximum sentence for dangerous cycling is a £2,500 fine.

Her parents were understandably upset, but this was com-



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We will include the best on these pages too - ensuring your comments reach the widest possible audience. In addition, if you find your newsagent, supermarket or petrol station runs out of Yoursware before you've picked up your copy, you never need to miss out.

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pounded when a leading cycle expert stated that cyclists should never be prosecuted for being involved in an accident with a car, as the car driver would always be at fault.

What sort of idiot statement is

that? I would be more tolerant if those cyclists had manners.

The path outside my house is only wide enough for two people, yet we still have cyclists riding at very high speeds, most of which are schoolchildren.

There are also adults causing problems; the worst often kitted out in complete cycle regalia.

Occasionally you will get a cyclist who sees there are people walking on the pavement and they will wait till everyone passes or get off and walk.

Although they should not be on the pavement, at least they are thinking of other people.

The police, as usual, don't want to know, so what can we do?

Surely the time has come for cycles to be road-taxed, insured and have an MOT, like in other countries, especially as the amount of cycle lanes being installed is becoming a drain on public finance. And yes, I do own a bicycle.

Cycles are, in law, carriages (as a consequence of the Taylor v Goodwin judgment in 1879) and should be on the road not the pavement.

Martin Clarke, from Sittingbourne, by email

Editor's note: See Gary Wright's blog on the menace posed by cyclists on page 12

Thanks to all the Great runners

I am writing to thank our runners for taking part in this year's Great North Run and to all your readers who supported them.

The event was a great success with thousands of pounds raised for World Cancer Research Fund's (WCRF's) research and education programmes into the link between lifestyle and cancer.

Our runners have worked hard in training and we are grateful for their hard work and support.

They have also helped us raise awareness that about a third of

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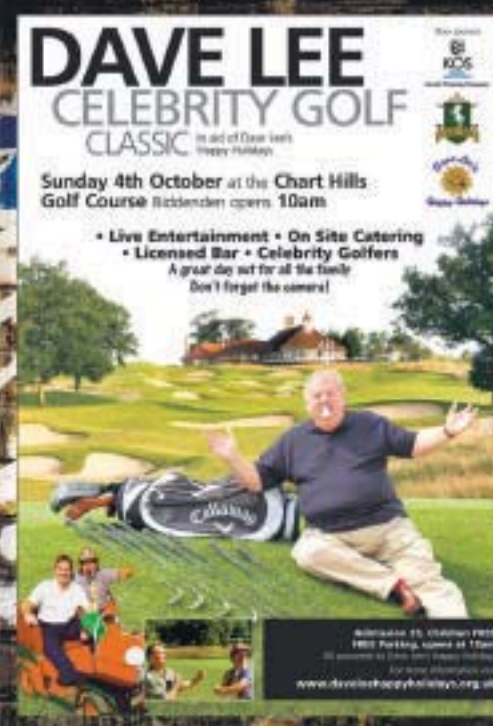
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the most common cancers could be prevented by eating healthily, being physically active and maintaining a healthy weight.

It's still not too late to sponsor WCRF's Great North Run team.

You can visit www.wcrf-uk.org/ sponsor or call 020 7343 4205.

Natalie Tarrant, events manager for World Cancer Research Fund, by email



Time BBC retuned into the real world

The BBC is like Woolworths, it is forgettable in large parts.

Like other aged institutions it has lost touch with reality, cushioned as it is by public finance.

Woolworths was missed for sentimental reasons but replaced in many places by popular 99p shops.

Customers of discounters have to be discerning, but generally most benefit from 99p stores, whereas Woolworths' stock failed to excite.

The whole government paraphernalia, including the BBC, fails to contribute to the nation in today's harsh climate; they must give back when our need is greater than theirs.

Dr Hazel Dawe, chair of Kent Green Party, makes valid points, (better, cheaper train services are required) which may not be Jeremy Clarkson's supporters' views or those who see no value in non-polluting alternative energy.

In last week's paper, your blogger Bill Furness said everyone needs to reduce energy consumption.

We should boycott major polluters. Why trade with China and others who will not do their bit?

At home, let's simplify life and get rid of affluenza, the disease contaminating our society that makes us spend on what we do not need.

The category to dispose of first is those double-standard preachers, press offices of government and local government, the Audit Commission and National Audit Office.

Rita Grootendorst, affordable living campaigner from Sidcup, by email

Help Humphrey to improve young lives

I would like to advise your readers that a special charity week will be taking place in October, in aid of The Children's Trust.

Humphrey's Pyjama Week is taking place from October 12 to 16.

Nurseries, pre-school groups and primary schools are invited to take part in this annual charity event.

Toddlers will be encouraged to put on their favourite sleepwear for a day at nursery or school and make a £2 donation.

Money from the event will benefit The Children's Trust, a national charity that provides care, education and therapy for children with multiple disabilities and complex health needs, and rehabilitation services to children with an acquired brain injury.

All children, who take part in a Humphrey's Pyjama Party will receive a sticker and certificate.

So don't delay! Join up now by registering online at www.thechildrenstrust.org.uk/humphrey

For further details you can email: humphrey@thechildrenstrust.org.uk or phone 01737 365019.

Gail Porter, vice-president of The Children's Trust, by email



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Come on folks!

The 17th Tenterden Folk Festival takes place this weekend with something to entertain everyone

FROM Morris dance to the music of the Appalachian Mountains, there is plenty going on at the Tenterden Folk Festival.

Now in its 17th year, the festival offers a busy programme of concerts, workshops, dance displays and fairs which are sure to keep folk fans of all ages entertained.

The public events get under way on Friday night with an English barn dance in the Moulton Hall, with music from Geckoes, pictured below inset, and the festival continues with

a tempting array of activities and entertainment.

Visitors can even enjoy performances on the move as dance sides, musicians and singers visit the Kent & East Sussex Railway.

This year's highlights include two special shows featuring regional folk songs and music.

The music of Kent is celebrated on Saturday in Oyster Girls and Hovelling Boys, which features performances by local musicians such as Brian Peters, main picture below, Marian Button, Pete Castle, Bob Kenward and Roger Resch, Dave Mason, The Millen Family and Andy

Turner. The show is named after a recently released CD, the third volume in a series of albums of songs from the county.

During the show, the audience will hear unaccompanied ballads, songs sung with a guitar or accordion accompaniment, a Kentish poem and tunes on the concertina.

Although many of the acts are well-known names on the local folk scene, the audience will also meet Dave Mason, a young poet from Tenterden who wrote The Kentish Woman's Way. There will also be a performance by Betherden farming clan The Millen Family, who still cherish a long-standing singing tradition.

At the end of the show, which takes place in the Saddlery at the side of the White Lion at 6pm, all the artists will join in a rendition of The Whitstable May Song.

The second special concert will be held in the Evans Bar of the Tenterden Club at 1.30pm on Sunday, when Wiltshire songs will be performed in Sing the Year Round.

Tinkers Bag will be providing the entertainment, singing the songs that have been enjoyed at concerts and folk clubs in Wiltshire and beyond.

With their vast array of instruments, from melodeons and bouzouki to kazoo and the shaky egg, the group of friends draw on their established repertoire and also present some brand new songs.

These are just a few of the numerous concerts and events on offer, so pick up a programme or visit the website at www.tenterdenfolkfestival.org.uk to browse the full festival listings.

TENTERDEN FOLK FESTIVAL

Friday, October 2 to Sunday, October 4



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JAMES KEELAGHAN

Wednesday, October 7
The Chimney Boy, Faversham



FROM world events to universal emotions, James Keelaghan is a true storyteller in the best folk tradition.

The Canadian singer-songwriter makes a welcome return to Faversham Folk Club next week, where the audience can look forward to hearing his passionate stories about himself and his land. With a passion for history and influences that 'never stop', Keelaghan has built up an international following for his distinct sound and he tours the US, Europe and Australia regularly.

Growing up with a humorous mother and storyteller father, Keelaghan listened to a lot of Irish music and was also influenced by the likes of Jethro Tull, Neil Young, Bruce Cockburn, Joni Mitchell and Captain



Beefheart. He was also inspired by the voice and guitar style of Liam Clancy, the poetry of Keats and the stage presence of Harry Belafonte.

His rich baritone voice makes his superb songs even easier to absorb, while his sense of humour helps to

build an intimate rapport with the audience.

The music starts at 8.30pm and tickets cost £7 for club members or £8 for non-members. Admission is free for under-18s. For more information call 01795 423674.

JON HOLMES

Wednesday, October 7
Sidney Cooper Gallery, Canterbury



FORMER student Jon Holmes returns to take part in Canterbury Christ Church University's public lecture series.

The top radio comedian finds himself on the other side of the lectern when he discusses the stellar career that has taken him from Canterbury to Comedy. As co-creator of the multi-award-winning Dead Ringers and star of Radio 4's The Now Show, Holmes has become an esteemed comedian and writer with many impressive credits to his name.

After graduating with a joint degree in English and Radio, Film & Television, Holmes landed his own show on Radio 4 called Grievous Bodily Radio. He has worked with Armando Iannucci on projects such as the Sony Award-winning Charm Offensive and Time Trumpet, hosted his own show on BBC6 Music and written and performed on many TV shows such as Mock The Week, Have I Got News For You and The Impressionable Jon Culshaw.

Alongside scripting the BAFTA Film Awards with Stephen Fry, he hosted the MOJO Awards and is also a published author.

The lecture, which starts at 6pm, is free to attend but tickets must be booked. To secure your seat call 01227 782266.

THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE

Monday, October 5 to
Wednesday, October 7
Central Theatre, Chatham



DARK comedy, melodrama and tragedy combine in the multi-award-winning play, The Beauty Queen of Leenane.

Set in the Irish backwaters of County Galway, Martin McDonagh's highly acclaimed story introduces us to Maureen, a plain 40-year-old whose lonely existence revolves around caring for her manipulative, elderly mother, Mag.

When two men visit their cottage, bringing with them Maureen's first and last chance of a loving relationship, Mag does her best to spoil her daughter's prospects.



But her interference sets in motion a chain of events that will lead to a terrifying finale.

The Beauty Queen of Leenane was first performed in 1996, as a Druid Theatre and Royal Court Theatre co-production, and soon attracted a host of accolades. McDonagh won the Evening Standard Award for Most Promising Playwright before

seeing the play transfer to Broadway, where it was nominated for six Tony Awards.

The play contains strong language and the recommended lower age limit is 14. Tickets cost £16/£14 or £9 when booking three plays in a season. Book online at www.medway.gov.uk/theatrebooking or call the box office on 01634 338338.

SWALE LEISURE

Neil Diamond tribute evening is a real gem

FANS of Neil Diamond can enjoy an intimate evening of live acoustic music with tribute artist, Bob Drury.

Drury will be joined by bass player Andy Wall as he sings the favourite hits in The Neil Diamond Story: Acoustic Diamond. The show can be seen at the Avenue Theatre in Avenue of Remembrance, Sittingbourne, 7.30pm Friday. Tickets cost £9.50. Book on 01795 471140.

Join trip to see musical Sister Act in London

GET back into the habit of enjoying great musicals by joining a trip to see Sister Act at the London Palladium.

The show opened to rave reviews earlier this year and is based on the hit film starring Whoopi Goldberg. The trip is on Friday, October 23 and costs £57, including stalls ticket and return coach from Faversham. Book on 01795 535293 or visit The Sweet Scene in Preston Street.

Trot along to see gig at the Four Horse Shoes

FROM Muse to Metallica, Where's My Thing? covers a diverse range of hits from popular rock and indie artists.

The band will be playing at the Four Horse Shoes in Headhill Road, Graveney, at 5pm on Sunday. To find out more about the band visit the website at www.wheresmything.co.uk.

For further information about the gig call the pub on 01795 532095.

Lyricists should tune in to this competition

ASPIRING songwriters could win a Gibson Les Paul guitar by giving their take on a number one hit.

Simply re-write the lyrics to Natasha Bedingfield's These Words to be in with a chance of winning the guitar, a VIP tour of the Gibson showroom in London and four tickets to the British Music Experience at the O2. Competition closes November 13. Enter at www.puresolo.com/soundsurf09.

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■ Twydall Tandoori

THE Twydall Tandoori prides itself on offering a range of Indian dishes which bring together a vast range of the cuisines which the sub-continent offers.

Over the nine years it has been in business the eatery has established an excellent reputation both throughout the Medway towns and beyond for the excellence of its cuisine and the knowledgeable and friendliness of its staff.

The area was lacking a good quality restaurant when the venture was first established but that has been well and truly rectified as diners arrive to take their meals in comfortable surroundings. A recent refurbishment has added to the quality.

All the dishes are prepared individually and fresh spices are used in order that the full flavour and variety of the food can be appreciated by diners who know they want that little bit more than is offered at the usual run-of-the-mill curry house.

The restaurant can cater for families with high chairs available on request for very young children. Birthdays, office and Christmas parties and stag and hen dos are also catered for.

There is a banquet night held every



Tuesday where customers can choose any items on the menu for a set price.

Customers can order over the telephone for a takeaway and collect their orders within 15-20 minutes. A 10 per cent discount is offered on orders over £10.

The restaurant is open for lunch from 12 noon until 2.30pm and for dinner from 5.30pm until 11.30pm, although it closes at 10pm on Sundays.

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Martin's

Starter: a scallop shell filled with fresh crab and avocado topped with cheddar cheese and grilled. Main course: prime Scotch fillet steak cooked in brandy, worcester sauce, mushrooms and cream. Dessert: homemade Mars bar cake. Telephone: 01227 750304.

Yoshi

Starter: black tiger prawn wrapped in pastry and deep fried, served with a sweet chilli sauce. Main: slices of honey-roasted duck, stir-fried with onions and red and yellow peppers in a homemade Thai aromatic herb sauce with abalone. Telephone: 01227 455888.

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You'll be seeing things in this children's book

A YOUNG girl must face up to a terrifying apparition in the magical children's book, *Sylvie and the Songman*.

Written by Kent author Tim Binding, the story is an exciting adventure that will captivate readers aged from nine to 14. Released in hardback last year, the beautifully illustrated novel will be available in paperback from tomorrow.

Sylvie and the Songman is published by Corgi Children's and priced at £6.99.

Ozzy Osbourne will be rocking Bluewater

THE Prince of Darkness visits Bluewater this weekend to sign copies of his new autobiography, *I Am Ozzy*.

An unmistakable rock star and television personality, Ozzy Osbourne has lived an extraordinary life and his story should make remarkable reading. He will be making an appearance at Waterstone's at 1pm on Saturday.

I Am Ozzy, priced at £20, is published by Sphere on tomorrow. For more details about the event call 01322 624831.

Wine master class will be a grape evening

WINE enthusiasts can enjoy some top tipples at a sparkling wine master class in Tunbridge Wells.

Hosted by Spanish sparkling winemaker Codorníu, the event will be led by flamboyant TV wine expert, Joe Wadsack. Participants can taste seven Codorníu products and also learn more about the heritage and qualities of sparkling wine. The event takes place at the Hotel du Vin in Tunbridge Wells on Friday, October 16. To book call 01892 500265.

Get to the core of Kent's apple history

KENT'S heritage as a fruit-growing county is celebrated with a new updated trail guide, *Apple Source*.

Created by Produced in Kent, the free, fold-out guide includes lots of information about the Garden of England's apple-growing history and takes the reader on a three-mile circular walk from Chilham.

The free guide is available at tourist information centres across Kent and can be downloaded online at www.producedinkent.co.uk.

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UPDATING your wardrobe for a new season can be expensive, but outfits are transformed by a great new belt.

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ADVENTURELAND (15)



In the summer of 1987, a college graduate takes a part-time job in a theme park and sets himself up for heartbreak when he falls for a co-worker who is having a secret affair with the park's handyman.

INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS (18)



Quentin Tarantino's war opus is a blood-soaked fairytale set in Nazi-occupied France, divided into five hefty chapters. He splices genres to dizzying effect across its two-and-a-half hours.

The humble origin of a highly evolved career

■ BY SUSAN GRIFFIN

PAUL Bettany has been wowing theatre-goers and independent movie fans for years, but it took his buttock-baring turn as Chaucer in *A Knight's Tale* for Hollywood big-wigs to sit up and take notice.

He now cites roles in *The Da Vinci Code* and Oscar-winning movies *A Beautiful Mind*, where he met his wife Jennifer Connelly, and *Master And Commander* among his impressive resume. But his latest role has proved his most daunting yet.

In *Creation*, Bettany plays the revolutionary scientist Charles Darwin, author of arguably the most explosive book in history, *On the Origin of Species*.

Published 150 years ago, the book was a culmination of more than 20 years of research inspired by his travels as a young man.

In the work, he revealed a scientific explanation for the diversity of species, including the evolution of man, and forever changed the way we view our place in the world.

Creation is based upon *Annie's Box*, a book written by Darwin's great-great grandson, Randal Keynes.

In it, we see Darwin as a young and vibrant family man – albeit one whose mental and physical health gradually buckles under the weight of guilt and grief for a lost child, his beloved ten-year-old daughter, Annie.

A man torn between his love for his deeply religious wife and his own growing belief in a world where God has no place, Darwin even wrote that by effectively 'killing' God he felt like he was "confessing a murder".

So there's much to talk about as I prepare to interview the 38-year-old actor. Opening a



GHOST: Paul Bettany shadowed Charles Darwin's actual footsteps during the filming at Down House

door, I step into a grand but dimly-lit room. There is shelf upon shelf of books but no sign of Mr Bettany, so I take a seat and only then do I notice the soles of two feet hanging off the end of a line of chairs.

"Um... Paul," the PR says gently and a rather tired looking Bettany pops his head up.

It turns out Bettany is feeling rather poorly but, ever the professional, he takes his seat under the spotlight and ploughs on.

VIEW THIS PREVIEW

yourkenttv.co.uk



His blue eyes may look slightly glassy but even in this exhausted state, Bettany still makes a striking figure. Tall and slim, his hair shaved for a film role but it only maximises his razor-sharp cheekbones.

"Darwin's a bit of a hero of mine. I think he was an extraordinarily brave human being," he says in quiet but well-spoken words. "I like the idea of a person who is a social conservative having this revolutionary idea."

He felt particularly close to his character while filming at Darwin's actual home, Down House in Kent: "It was beautiful. I am not particularly sentimental but I was really moved. I found it extraordinary to walk that walk where a great deal of his thinking was done. You felt a bit like a ghost for a second."

CREATION
Certificate 15



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Morris Havard Dining Table & 4 Chairs Previous Price £1599 Sale £549	Willis Gambier Light Oak Wardrobe Previous Price £849 Sale £499	G-Plan Malvern 3 Seater Power Rec. Sofa Plus Chair Previous Price £2875 Sale £1395	Millbrook 5' 4 Drawer Pocket Sprung Divan Set Previous Price £1000 Sale £499	Cintique Avon Support Chair Previous Price £450 Sale £299

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US band set to make odd name for themselves in UK



NAME OF THE GAME: LA-based rock band Upsilon Acrux will be playing with Honey Ride Me a Goat and The Laze at the Tap 'n' Tin, Chatham, as part of the European tour

■ BY **SIMON ROBINSON**

UNWRITTEN rule of rock number 117; all instrumental bands must have an absurdly obscure name.

Notable non-lyric outfits include Ozric Tentacles, Mogwai – who took their moniker from the Cantonese for ghost or devil – and more recently 65daysofstatic.

Continuing the trend are Los Angeles rockers Upsilon Acrux, who play at the Tap 'n' Tin, Chatham, tomorrow night.

The avant-garde five-piece's Kent gig will also be their first in the UK and comes halfway through their debut European tour.

With the band rumoured to make this their first and last tour outside the US, a

TAP 'N' TIN LINE-UP

Upsilon Acrux, The Laze and Honey Ride Me a Goat

spokesman for promoter Kitchen Dweller Records urged post-punk fans to grab the opportunity to see them live.

He said: "They are one of the most creative and original of the great post-punk, avant-garde rock bands today and are regulars of the now legendary Smell venue in LA.

Legendary

"They've just released their sixth album of explosive, intense and beautiful instrumental rock on the Cuneiform record label.

"They continue to develop their uncompro-

mising sound and intense live shows with such acts as The Boredoms, Mission of Burma, The Locust, Don Caballero, Dillinger Escape Plan, Hella and Lightning Bolt.

"Don't miss this rare opportunity to see one of Upsilon Acrux's legendary live performances in the UK."

Support on the night comes from established Kent instrumentalists Honey Ride Me a Goat and Merseyside-based rockers The Laze.

A special commemorative split vinyl record, featuring Upsilon Acrux and Honey Ride Me a Goat, containing new material from both bands will be available on the night.

The first five people who send an email to mail@kitchendweller.com will also receive free tickets to the show.

Doors open at 8pm, with the first band set to take to the stage an hour later. Entry costs £3.

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SUMMER SOUNDS: The best of Antfest 2009, at The Command House, Chatham



HEAVYWEIGHTS: Rockers 3dbs Down play at The Beacon Court, Gillingham



TOP FIVE KENT GIGS

- 1 Neonhalo – 10/10 The Oast House, Rainham
- 2 Shychlo And The Boys – 24/10 Canterbury, Tales Gillingham
- 3 CWB – 25/10 The World Bar, Margate
- 4 Backburner – 30/10 The Dublin Man O'War, Dover
- 5 The Suspects – 30/10 The Britannia, Margate

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YOUR TV REVIEW

■ BY TOM BETTS

HOLE IN THE WALL BBC1, 5.45pm, Saturday

I COULDN'T quite believe my ears when I heard that Hole in the Wall was returning to our screens for another run.

I'll always remember where I was when I heard the news, just like some people can remember where they were when they heard JFK had been shot.

Yes, I was at home watching telly, wondering how we arrived at this point.

To sum up, HITW is a show so dumb that it gives dumbing down a bad name.

Teams of celebrity non-entities clad themselves in silver skin-tight Lycra suits and stupid coloured bicycle helmets and try to adopt a shape that has been cut out of a giant wall as it approaches them.

If they succeed in forming the shape the wall passes over them to much cheering and whooping, but if they fail they are knocked into a pool of water, to even more whooping and cheering from the audience.

Yes, it's really that stupid and juvenile and the attire leaves little to the imagination.

Why this stupid nonsense has been recommissioned is a mystery to me and someone at the BBC should be fayed in public.

Granted, it's only supposed to be a bit of light fun, but the contestants seem to take it all far too seriously.

They come across as desperate losers who will gladly humiliate themselves if it means appearing on telly to boost their profile in some small way.

Former host Dale Winton has departed and been replaced by Strictly Come Dancing star, and previous series team captain, Anton du Beke, who has the charisma of a bluebottle.



FILLING A GAP: Former team captain Anton Du Beke takes over as host of Hole in the Wall

The change is the TV equivalent of swapping a reliable Vauxhall Vectra for a Skoda but Anton looks happy enough to escape wearing the silver suit on a weekly basis and bounces around the set like a village idiot.

If the punishment for failure was more exciting than simply seeing someone toppled into a glorified swimming pool, this would be much more entertaining.

In my dreams the whooping and cheering on Extreme Hole in the Wall would be justified.

Joe Swash's failure to complete a wall would result with him being plunged into a vat of boiling acid, while Vanessa Feltz's misery would be compounded with being knocked into a snake pit filled with king cobras.

Sadly though, that could be a wall too far for Saturday tea time, and that is a real shame.

YOUR WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

BY RUSSELL GRANT



AQUARIUS (Jan 21-Feb 19)
GETTING in shape should be your first order of business this week. If you look good physically it will give you the confidence to make your move. If you are single, you'll soon find a lover once you shed those extra pounds. Fortunately, your willpower is at an all-time high.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aquarius** 09067-531762



TAURUS (Apr 21-May 21)
BE direct with the object of your affection. Playing cat and mouse games will just annoy them. Fortunately, you've got plenty of sex appeal and will have no trouble catching their eye. If you're in a relationship, you have an opportunity to rekindle the passion that first drew you together.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Taurus** 09067-531753



LEO (Jul 24-Aug 23)
KEEP your career plans secret. A high paying job is about to open, and it could be tailor-made for you. The fewer people who know about this opportunity the easier it will be for you to get it. Don't be afraid to press your case for a higher salary than you are initially offered.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Leo** 09067-531756



SCORPIO (Oct 24-Nov 22)
A DESIRE for travel could prompt you to step out of your comfort zone. Fortunately, a friend is happy to tag along on this journey. Although this trip will be enjoyable, you will have to be tough every once in a while. Being an outsider is never easy.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Scorpio** 09067-531759



PISCES (Feb 20-Mar 20)
YOUR power packed sex drive prompts you to go for gold and try to net someone sexy. The quickest way into their heart is through their mind. Find out what their hobbies are. Read their favourite books and watch their top films. Take up a sport or activity they enjoy.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Pisces** 09067-531763



GEMINI (May 22-Jun 21)
A MONEYMAKING opportunity should prompt you into action. The competition will be fierce, but you will emerge as the top candidate. That's because you've got a complex calculating mind. You can process information and come up with analysis that puts everyone to shame.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Gemini** 09067-531754



VIRGO (Aug 24-Sep 23)
IT'S easy to win people to your side, thanks to your winning personality. Making changes to an outmoded system is possible, thanks to your ability to rally the troops. Approach the person in charge with humour. If they feel like they're being attacked they'll dig their heels in big time.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Virgo** 09067-531757



SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23-Dec 21)
DON'T be bashful about your passion for a certain subject. Some may accuse you of being a geek, and maybe they're right, but there are worse things to be. Discussing your obsession may encourage others to admit their fascination with the same subject.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Sagittarius** 09067-531760



ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 20)
REARRANGING your domestic schedule will make you more productive in every way. Recently, you've taken charge of everything, mostly because you work fast and don't dilly dally. Be brave and delegate duties to relatives and room-mates. Don't fret over the cost.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Aries** 09067-531752



CANCER (Jun 23-Jul 23)
NORMALLY you think twice about plunging into new situations, but now you won't be able to stop yourself. Follow your impulses, no matter where they lead. If you lock eyes with someone sexy, be sure to ask for a date. The two of you will form an immediate connection.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Cancer** 09067-531755



LIBRA (Sep 24-Oct 23)
YOU have to be very sneaky about your career ambitions. A high-powered position is opening up, but if people think you are a contender they'll try to undermine your confidence. Be gentle as a dove and wise as a serpent. Gather as much information as you can about the job.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Libra** 09067-531758



CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 20)
YOU will be the one who has to make the first move in a relationship. The object of your affection is too shy to approach you. Fortunately, you won't have much trouble striking up a conversation. The two of you have many interests in common, as well as similar ethics.
• To find out more about what the stars have in store call Russell on **Capricorn** 09067-531761

Calls cost 75p per minute. Service provided by g8wave London N7

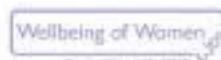
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- Dancing

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email laura@saggarsbenefit2009.co.uk



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No107

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Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9

EASY

9				1	8		4
8		5			6	7	1
	6		8		3		5
	2		9			3	
	8	6	4		2	9	5
	9			8	4		
			2				3
4	3					1	6
6					7	8	

MEDIUM

			4				1	5
1		4			6		7	
				9		3	8	
					2	8	4	
2		7	9					
7		1		8				
	2		3		5		7	
8	6			4				

HARD

			4	8			7	6
					4		8	9
				7				1
5			1			6		
	8						1	
		3			2			5
1					7			
	2	8		5				
7	5			6	4			

CRYPTIC CLUES

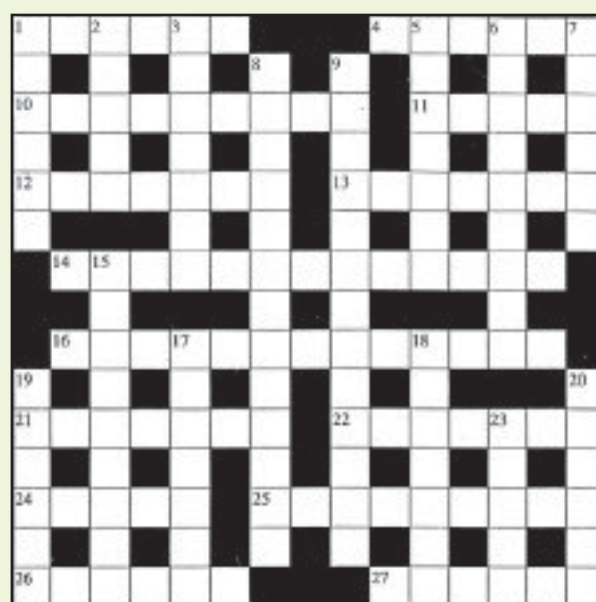
ACROSS

- 1 Distant gambling game played very loudly (3-3)
- 4 Commander takes director to port in Morocco (6)
- 10 Preserve indeed found in lake in Wales, it's a spicy dish (9)
- 11 Outsize vehicle's statuette (5)
- 12 One came from in France inside to world of scholars (7)
- 13 Again adjust one's sight and force US into manoeuvres (7)
- 14 Successful sowers hope to do this eventually (4,3,6)
- 16 Sudden fall of rain (1,3)
- 21 Gold fish first, it is flat on top (7)
- 22 Book I study of law first (7)
- 24 Glacial ridge in The Skerries (5)
- 25 Current father? (9)
- 26 Beating concealment (6)
- 27 Pope troubled by the French (6)

DOWN

- 1 Islander naïf about jibe, not half included (6)
- 2 One of two bachelors leaving cake for dance (5)
- 3 A bursting into flames during outbreak of violence (5-2)
- 5 Quite a number with virtuous fellow we brought up (4,3)
- 6 Goods badly cracked on the turn (4-5)
- 7 Most unusual Sartre novel (6)
- 8 Commit oneself to dive (4,3,6)
- 9 Strange tribal reaction to military bluster (5-8)
- 15 Listener noticed that it had been put on one side (9)
- 17 Band opposing Ronald, revolutionary leader (7)
- 18 Nails, say, for nothing without VAT? (3-4)
- 19 Address for delivery (6)
- 20 Wrong amount ruefully included (6)
- 23 Upset, having got the chop? (3-2)

SCRIBBLE HERE



QUICK CLUES

ACROSS

- 1 Tull, English agriculturist (6)
- 4 and Hyde (6)
- 10 Musical note (9)
- 11 Anaesthetic (5)
- 12 In place (anag.) (7)
- 13 In progress (2,5)
- 14 Echidna (5,8)
- 16 Set in one's ways (4-2-3-4)
- 21 Soulful person (7)
- 22 Old-fashioned (7)
- 24 Garishness (5)
- 25 Overtax one's strength (9)
- 26 Oil-carrying vessel (6)
- 27 African fly (6)

DOWN

- 1 Hebrew patriarch (6)
- 2 Sri Lankan language (5)
- 3 Cross the (7)
- 5 Agamemnon's daughter (7)
- 6 Sailors' chant (2-5-2)
- 7 Ruling (anag.) (6)
- 8 Rebirth (1,3)
- 9 State of exalted happiness (7,6)
- 15 Doctor (9)
- 17 Fine rain (7)
- 18 Give evidence (7)
- 19 Meatball (6)
- 20 Water heater (6)
- 23 Pursuit (5)

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LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

SUDOKU SOLUTIONS No106

EASY

6	3	2	7	8	9	5	1	4
4	9	1	8	5	2	8	3	7
8	5	7	1	4	3	2	9	6
9	2	6	8	1	7	3	4	5
5	1	4	9	3	6	7	8	2
3	7	8	4	2	5	9	6	1
2	6	5	3	9	1	4	7	8
7	8	9	2	6	4	1	5	3
1	4	3	5	7	8	6	2	9

MEDIUM

1	9	8	7	2	6	4	3	5
2	7	6	5	4	3	8	1	9
3	5	4	9	8	1	7	2	6
9	8	7	1	3	4	6	5	2
5	1	3	6	7	2	9	8	4
4	6	2	8	5	9	1	7	3
6	3	9	2	1	8	5	4	7
7	2	1	4	9	6	3	5	8
8	4	5	3	6	7	2	9	1

HARD

4	3	2	6	8	9	5	1	7
6	1	9	3	7	5	2	8	4
5	7	8	1	2	4	9	3	6
3	2	5	9	6	7	8	4	1
8	6	1	5	4	3	7	2	9
7	9	4	2	1	8	3	6	5
9	5	6	8	3	1	4	7	2
1	8	7	4	5	2	6	9	3
2	4	3	7	9	6	1	5	8

CRYPTIC SOLUTION No106

ACROSS: 8 Inflexion 9 Leave 10 Clip-joint
11 Gismo 12 Copper-bottomed 15 Afar
17 Tasty 19 Scan 21 Royal enclosure 23
Ashet 24 Breakdown 26 Canoe 27
Charwoman. **DOWN:** 1 En bloc 2 Flypaper
3 Exponent 4 Coin 5 Flighty 6 Balsamic
7 Recording 13 Basic 14 Matriarch 16
Anything 18 Yeomanry 19 Squadron 20
Blitzed 22 Enwrap 25 Ruhr.

QUICK SOLUTION No107

Fagot 20 Kettle 23 Quest
15 Physician 17 Dazzle 18 Witness 19
Luring 8 Reinforcement 9 Seventh heaven
Tamil 3 Rubicon 5 Electra 6 Yo-heave-ho 7
Tamer 27 Tectae. **DOWN:** 1 Joseph 2
Antique 24 Gift 25 Overexert 26
amateur 16 Dyed-in-the-wool 21 Spinny
11 Ether 12 Pelican 13 En train 14 Spiny
ACROSS: 1 Jetiro 4 Jekyll 10 Semibreve

Answers to all of this week's quizzes can be found on our website



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No time to sleep when in Seattle

BY TOM MORGAN

SEATTLE, it is said, is a city where salmon swim upstream in the middle of town and bald eagles share the sky with aeroplanes.

Our whistle-stop tour of the entire state began in the city, whose defining landmark – despite the tourist information pack's vision of spawning fish and rare birds of prey – is probably the Space Needle building, which dwarfs all that it surrounds.

However, it's the 100-year-old Pike Place Market, a bustling food centre near the city's harbour, that gives the region its lifeblood.

Bustling food stalls are often the most photogenic of settings, but this one is an assault on the senses, with vivid colours, eardrum-bursting shrieks from market traders and smells that linger across the city. From elite restaurants frequented by Hollywood star Robin Williams to market stalls lined with bargains, it is a veritable feast for even the most demanding foodie.

Even when you leave the city, you needn't look far for your next bite. Surrounded by a fishing harbour and vast fertile countryside within an hour's drive, it is not hard to see how Pike Place became a success.

Located in the Pacific Northwest, Seattle is surrounded on all sides by the windswept waters of Puget Sound.

Touring could not be easier, with boat cruises, open-top buses and monorails among the options. A favourite, if somewhat indulgent, choice is a short sightseeing flight with Kenmore Air (www.kenmoreair.com).

The trip takes you across the surprisingly Metropolis-like city towards the sprawling millionaire waterfront pads, including Bill Gates' extravagant home.



STUNNING VIEW: From the sprawl of the city to countryside explorations, there's lots to keep you busy in Seattle

And tourists who can tear themselves away from the city are also in for a pleasant surprise. Washington State, blessed with spectacular natural assets, has added to its lure by offering an enticing combination of fine local wine and produce.

We travelled to the town of Spokane on a short internal flight and stayed in the welcoming boutique setting of Hotel Lusso. After an artery-busting breakfast on a train carriage at Frank's Diner, our escape to the countryside was welcome.

Talk to anyone in rural Washington, and they are likely to bend your ear about wine.

The region struggles to compete commercially with California, but locals are tremendously proud of their vineyards, which have nearly

doubled in size in the past five years.

Tasting trips can take you to Richland and Walla Walla, where you will drink more than enough to make you an overnight connoisseur.

After the fine wines and fresh local produce, including spectacular cheeses, you will be more than ready for a little exercise.

Our solution was to take to the water in kayaks. The instructor from Spokane's Parks and Recreation (tel: +001 509 625 6200) who guided us through the idyllic Little Spokane River, was as calm as the tranquil waters we followed downstream.

With the sun beating down on us, we barely realised we had passed an entire afternoon as we paddled our way through the region's rich, lush grassland.

FACT FILE: WASHINGTON STATE

Time difference	- 8 hours (GMT)
Capital	Olympia
Language	English
Population	About 6.6 million
Currency	£1 = approx US \$1.6
Religion	Christian
Largest city	Seattle

Travel facts

• Tom Morgan was a guest of Seattle and Washington State Tourism, and flew with KLM from London. KLM flies daily ex-Heathrow to Seattle from £419 return. KLM reservations: 0871 222 7474 and www.klm.com.

• Tour operators to the region include Bon Voyage, which offers ten-night fly-drives from £629 for October 2009-May 2010 departures, including flights and car hire.

Bon Voyage reservations: 0800 316 0191

America As You Like It offers seven nights in Seattle and Washington State from £870 (two sharing), incl flights and car hire.

As You Like It reservations: 020 8742 8299 and www.americaasyoulikeit.com.

• For Seattle & Washington State enquiries call 020 7978 5233 or visit www.visitseattle.org or www.experiencewa.com.



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Still the nation of gazumpers

■ BY NICK AMES

A STUDY has found that gazumping continues to be a significant issue in the UK property market.

Despite the slow sales that have been such a feature of the property downturn, more than one person in 10 who responded to a question about sales being hijacked at the last minute said they had been a victim of such actions.

And more than one in five said that if the opportunity arose for them to pursue a last-minute sale at the expense of another purchaser, they would do so without taking anyone else's feelings into consideration.

Gazumping happens when someone makes an offer on a property that is agreed to, only for someone to come in at the last minute and make the purchase with a higher offer.

It works because any agreement between buyer and seller is not recognised in law until a contract has been signed.

It is the period between when an offer is made and when a contract is signed that creates room for gazumping, with the original buyer losing out if they will not beat the later offer.

The figures mean home-buyers could be forking out up to £290 million annually in pointless surveys, searches and lawyers' fees when they are gazumped at the last hurdle, according to a new study from leading independent personal finance website Fool.co.uk.



BAD NEWS DAY: Research shows that one in five of us are happy to shatter the dreams of other home-buyers

From a survey of 2,000 of its readers, Fool.co.uk – which was looking at malpractice within the industry – found that 12 per cent had been gazumped over the past year.

More startlingly, 22 per cent revealed they

would attempt to gazump a sale if they could, and the property were desirable enough, with 11 per cent describing it as a “necessary evil”.

Gazumping is especially a problem for first-time buyers, who are unlikely to have the

available capital to match a gazumping bid, especially when more than 10 per cent of the UK property market is now powered by buy-to-let operations with deeper pockets.

According to Alison Hunt at Fool.co.uk, there are some basic steps that a buyer can attempt to make to prevent gazumping:

1. Insist the property is removed from the market.
2. Sell your property before buying another.
3. Exchange contracts as quickly as possible.
4. Maintain a good relationship with the seller.

5. Work with agents on an exclusive basis. In the meantime, buyers are warned to be aware of the risk of being gazumped, though as house prices stall, and sales volume stalls, property-buyers may be increasingly less likely to suffer from being gazumped.

David Kuo, head of personal finance at Fool.co.uk, said: “For many people, the purchase of a house will probably be the biggest single acquisition they will ever make.

“It can take months of searching to find the ideal home and anything that dashes the dream can be emotionally draining, especially if it is the result of being gazumped.

“But it's not only emotions that get hurt when you are gazumped – finances can take a battering, too.

“Consequently, it is important to minimise the chances of being gazumped, though it is not possible to eliminate the risk completely.

“It is sometimes said that gazumping is the price we pay for free-market competition.”

PROPERTY NEWS

Confidence grows as investors back property

ALMOST half of UK consumers believe that buying property is the best way to invest money.

In a study by Scottish Widows, 48 per cent of those polled said investing in property was the best way to maximise returns on hard-earned cash.

This figure is a significant increase on 12 months ago, when just 28 per cent of those surveyed cited property as the best choice of investment.

Commenting on the results, Jason Butler of Bloomsbury Financial Planning said investors should avoid “backing one horse”, adding that there was no such thing as a “best investment”.

He acknowledged that many investors “want to invest in [property] over and above other investments”.

However, he warned that investors looking to build their property portfolio should proceed with caution because the property market fluctuated depending on the borrowing options available.

Lower deposit boost for FTBs

FIRST-TIME buyers will be happy to learn that mortgage-lenders are now asking for lower deposits.

According to Mortgageforce, the average deposit required in August was 21.25 per cent – down from 25 per cent the previous month.

The move is regarded as a sign that confidence is returning after months of gloom.

Katie Tucker, Mortgageforce technical manager, said: “More generous deals are available – the ongoing stability of house prices reduces the risk of negative equity and repossession that lenders are keen to avoid, so we should see more accommodating terms.”

However, Ms Tucker also advises borrowers to be clear about the difference between ‘discount’ and ‘tracker’ loans, explaining that discount rates do not follow the base rate.

They are instead linked to bank and building society standard variable rates, which can be changed at the lender's whim.

In related news, prospective buyers should be aware that from January next year, stamp duty will be reintroduced on properties over £125,000.

This time last year, the Government opted to increase the stamp duty threshold from £125,000 to £175,000.

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This is our view of the current property market

We don't talk the market down - we look for ways to make the market work for our customers. We know that it will be full of challenges and we look forward to every one of them.

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EAR8057 06/2009

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Asking Price £127,500

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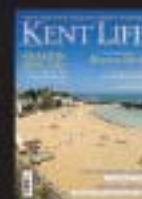
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- CONSERVATORY
- LARGE SECLUDED PLOT
- AMPLE OFF ROAD PARKING
- DETACHED GARAGE

£330,000

REF: 00000121



Newington

- 4 BEDROOM DETACHED
- 3 RECEPTION ROOMS
- EN-SUITE
- GOOD SIZED REAR GARDEN

Guide Price £365,000 - £385,000

- SECLUDED LOCATION
- SWEEPING DRIVEWAY
- GARAGE
- VILLAGE LOCATION

REF: GRV02606



Chatham

- MODERN 4 BEDROOM DETACHED
- 16FT LOUNGE
- VICTORIAN STYLE CONSERVATORY
- ENSUITE TO MASTER BEDROOM

- DOWNSTAIRS CLOAKROOM
- GARAGE & O.R.P
- SOUTH FACING REAR GARDEN
- BLUE BELL HILL VILLAGE

£279,995

REF: 00000412



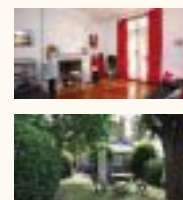
Walderslade

- 3 BEDROOM DET BUNGALOW
- 19FT LOUNGE
- 14FT KITCHEN/BREAKFAST ROOM
- 18FT CONSERVATORY

- FAMILY BATHROOM
- DET GARAGE & AMPLE O.R.P
- LARGE REAR GARDEN
- MUST BE VIEWED INTERNALLY

£299,995

REF: 0000000139



Gillingham

- DETACHED
- 3 DOUBLE BEDROOMS
- 2 RECEPTION ROOMS/CELLAR
- NO FORWARD CHAIN

- SASH WINDOWS
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- POTENTIAL FOR O.R.P

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MY EVERYTHING

Ashford based, bubbly and fun single mum, 23yr old, curvy build, brunette. I like reading and socialising. WLTm like minded male. Box 457472 ①

MATCH OF THE DAY!

Fun-to-be-with, blonde female, 25, 5ft2, a woman who loves football! Enjoys going out and staying in, looking for a like-minded man, to be her soulmate. Box 446494 ①

NOT YOUR

BROWN-EYED GIRL, BUT...
Blue-eyed brunette, 27, 5ft1, loves films, walking, darts, pool, singing, me time! Looking for honest guy with GSOH, to get to know. Box 880105 ① ②

IS ANYONE OUT THERE?

Old fashioned, independent female, WLTm cuddly fella to enjoy the finer things in life with, leading to LTR with the right person. Box 879931 ① ②

GIVE AND TAKE IN LOVE

Loving loyal female, 30, blue eyes, brown hair, seeking LTR with male 30-35, 6ft+, no baggage, in the Maidstone area. Box 448471 ①

HORSES FOR COURSES...

Caring, loving, affectionate female, 30, 5'2", blonde, likes walking, horse riding, animals, seeks affectionate male, 30-40, for lasting, loving relationship. Box 384013 ①

GOOD LUCK CHARM

Sporty female, 34, 5ft2, likes the gym, beach walks, Tennis and cycling, WLTm similar male in his 30s for friendship in Eastbourne. Box 453712 ①

A FAIRYTALE ENDING!

Princess Fiona, 34, looking to meet her Shrek. 5ft8, short brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, large build, seeks romantic caring guy for friendship, maybe more! Box 877957 ① ②

HAPPY DAYS!

Attractive, fun-loving female, 31, 5'4", size 12, dark hair with blonde highlights, tactile, WLTm intelligent, professional, attractive guy, for a happy relationship. Tunbridge Wells. Box 308734 ① ②

FEAST YOUR EYES ON ME...

Hello I'm Andrea, 35, petite 5ft3, shoulder length curly hair. I enjoy eating out, cinema and I'm looking for friendship and possible long term relationship. Box 453039 ①

SOUND GOOD?

Hello I'm 35, kind, caring and non-smoking, enjoys cooking, cinema, music, dining in and out, looking for that special someone to enjoy a relationship with. Box 447895 ①

SEALED WITH A KISS

Petite lady, 36, long hair, blue eyes, single mum, enjoys holidays, wine and dining, laughing, seeks loyal, loving man for friendship and more. Box 453079 ①

STARRY NIGHTS

Hello I'm Sarah, single mum from Kent, brown hair enjoy swimming nights in/out looking for a caring man to share the best thing in life. Box 878378 ①

HISTORIC MEETING?

Mum of three, 36, long mousey hair, blue eyes, interested in historical places, music, eating out, seeks kind, caring, genuine male 36-49, non-smoker, for LTR. Box 440693 ①

SOMETHING LASTING

Professional single mum, 37, own home, looking for a man for friendship, hopefully a permanent relationship. Hailsham Box 455221 ①

BE MINE

Honest and caring woman, 36, 5ft5, slim build, blue eyes, I'm caring, honest and have 4 children. I enjoy drives and horse riding. Maidstone. Box 456159 ①

WAITING FOR YOU

Curvy single mum, 38, 5ft7, romantic, loyal, loving and genuine, likes swimming, theatre, live music, dining out, seeking a LTR with a like-minded male. Rochester Box 458866 ①

CALL ME

Happy but shy girl of 37, loves all the normal things in life, seeks a mature guy, hoping for something lasting and meaningful. Bexhill-on-Sea. Box 452424 ①

SEIZE THE DAY

Loving female, 36, 5ft4, brown hair, green eyes, likes socialising, staying in, seeks genuine male for friendship and more. Box 428666 ①

LOVE TO LOVE YOU

Lovely female, 36, 5ft4, medium/large build, blonde hair, blue eyes, own house, likes socialising, staying in, seeks genuine male for long-term/serious relationship. Box 438102 ① ②

MEND A BROKEN HEART

Single mum, 37, fun-loving, been hurt in past, looking for nice, genuine guy for hopeful happiness - no time wasters! Box 908053 ① ②



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BLONDE AMBITION

Bubbly, cuddly, blonde single mum, 39, 5ft6, likes cars, reading, pubs, cosy nights in, having a laugh, looking for that right male for LTR. Box 905614 ① ②

CUTE AS CAN BE

Cute single mum of four, 38, Kent-based, into most things, looking for friendship, possibly romance. Box 897983 ①

YOUNG-AT-HEART

Attractive 38yr old female, dark brown hair, blue eyes, curvy physique, likes days out, music, cinema, walking, cycling, seeks loving, fun male, for friendship/relationship. Box 901893 ① ②

A NICE BOTTLE OF WINE

Lovely, glossy brunette, 39yr old, petite, bubbly and loving, enjoys theatre, music and eating out, WLTm a professional, loving and tactile male for a relationship. Box 442551 ① ②

JUST ONE QUESTION...

A warm, generous, attractive and caring lady, 40, seeks soulmate who will love, respect and cherish her. What's taking you so long? Box 873456 ①

WANNA RIDE WITH YOU

Curvaceous lady, 40, 5ft8, long curly hair, into motorbikes!! Single mum, seeks fun-loving bike fan for rides into the sunset. Eastbourne. Box 458787 ①

PERFECT MATCH

Hi I'm Nikki, 5ft7, brown hair, green eyes, enjoys animals especially my pets. Looking for a tall man who has a personality compatible with mine Box 453374 ①

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(Calls cost £1/min; contact your service provider for details)

BETWEEN US

Asian lady, 41, single, no ties, outgoing, fun-loving, professional, looking for white male, genuine, professional and solvent. Box 451900 ①

FOR A RELATIONSHIP?

Shy but confident once-known female, a mum, 40, likes socialising, tennis, walks, swimming; seeks gent with similar interests to find hopeful love with. Box 452106 ①

RECIPE FOR ROMANCE

Single mother, recently separated, 41, 5ft9, slim, blonde/blue eyes, WLTm fun loving man with GSOH, someone honest and genuine. I love cooking, cycling, outdoors. Folkestone. Box 457913 ①

JOINED AT THE HIP

Sociable petite girl with great SOH, 40, blonde, sociable, love football! Looking for fun guy with great SOH for inseparable partnership. Box 880434 ① ②

SMILE!

Looking for a fun-loving guy for a LTR. I'm 41, works as a dental nurse, easy to get on with, always up for fun times. Sittingbourne Box 454827 ①

BELLA ISABEL

Lovely, fun and caring brunette, 42, recently divorced, intelligent, hard working, fun-loving, WLTm a gent to socialise with. Tunbridge Wells Box 878250 ① ②

HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU

Audrey here, I live in Seaford and WLTm caring man. I'm fun loving, loyal, honest, adventurous and love animals, cooking, music, film, countryside. Box 872159 ①

LET'S DATE!

Hard-working woman, 42, WLTm a nice and caring man to date and be happy with. Herne Bay Box 455327 ①

LOVE IS ALL AROUND

Happy-go-lucky, bubbly blonde, 42, blue eyes, hard-working, love outings, looking for a nice, genuine guy for relationship. Bromley Box 454517 ①

HELLO EVERYONE!

Single dog-owner, 42, fun-loving, kind and loyal, likes meals out, weekends away, country walks, WLTm a non-smoking guy to share it all with. Seaford Box 454569 ①

ACTIVE TYPE

Lively, energetic fun loving mum, 42, 5ft3, petite, pretty, blonde/brown hair, hazel eyes, WLTm honest, fun, mixed race/black gent for lasting relationship. Box 451819 ① ②

TALL ORDER

Curvy lady, 5ft9, 43yrs old, blonde hair/green eyes. I live in Deal in Kent, I'm down-to-earth and like being out and about. Box 456020 ①

I SHOULD BE SO LUCKY

Hello, I'm Karen, 42, dark brown hair, medium build, GSOH, looking for a man with no issues and GSOH who can enjoy life with me. Box 452204 ①

LIVE LIFE TO THE FULL

Good-looking brunette from Kent, 43, 5ft10, likes bowling, eating in/out etc. Looking for a good-looking guy, 35-45, with GSOH for friendship/relationship. Box 450348 ①

SWEET AS HONEY

Petite, slim, long-blond lady, 5'4" age 44, enjoys the seaside and horse-racing. Looking for a dark-haired, genuine, honest and professional man, 25-50 in Brighton. Box 458465 ①

LOVE TO MEET YOU

Kind woman, 42, outgoing, happy-go-lucky, sometimes shy. I like gardening, socialising, travel, walks. Looking for happy, fun fella. Aylesford Box 428464 ①

RECIPE FOR ROMANCE

GSOH, honest, romantic and reliable woman, 45, dark blonde hair/blue eyes. WLTm honest and reliable man 40-55. I like reading, cooking, walks, theatre, animals. Box 457521 ①

STARTING OVER

Divorced 45yr old cuddly woman, brown eyes/hair, likes swimming, animals, cinema, soaps, the beach. WLTm a honest, non-smoking man for friendship, maybe more. Ashford Box 873141 ① ②

COME ON DOWN!

Honest, bubbly female 45, long hair, slim, enjoys walking, cinema, socialising; seeks honest, friendly chap for friendship leading to more. Box 882693 ①

FROM THIS MOMENT

Young-looking 46yr old female, 5ft4, slim, N/S, affectionate, loyal and caring, looking for a male, 40-45, N/S, up to 5ft7, to share life with. Ashford. Box 454591 ①

HEART AND SOUL

Easy-going single mum, 46, 5ft4, size 12/14, likes bowling, gardening, swimming, looking for a man, 35-49, slim/medium build with similar interests. Maidstone Box 454176 ①

FANCY A DRINK?

Hi, I'm June, 47, bubbly, loving. Looking for a trustworthy guy for a relationship. I enjoy walks, car-boots, travelling and sharing a bottle of red. Box 878294 ①

MY PRINCE?

Not-just-for-xmas dog lover, into sports, walks, motorbikes, GSOH, female, 47, pretty, long dark hair, looking for knight in shining armour! East Sussex area. Box 872361 ①

ARE YOU THE ONE FOR ME?

Caring, cute female, 46, petite, likes socialising, dancing, travelling, good food, seeking intelligent, loyal man 42-52 for love and TLC. Seaford. Box 444366 ①

ETERNALLY YOURS

Easygoing woman, likes most things in life; country walks, films, cinema, cooking. I'm 46, 5ft2, medium build. WLTm genuine, happy guy, easygoing and fun. Box 445635 ①

SAY YES!

Funny lady, 48, looking for tall/short hippy/biker/metal type to relieve the boredom. Must enjoy cat cuddling and have own chocolate because I never share! Box 878407 ①

A BETTER TOMORROW

Young 50, slim, non-smoker, female, autumn hair. Seeking a companion to make a new start with. I'm in Dover and enjoy countryside, walks, good food/wine. Box 458847 ①

JUST IMAGINE

Petite, brunette, bubbly, friendly, easy-going single mum, 49, enjoys cinema, eating out, socialising, most things. WLTm genuine male, to see where life takes us! Box 893562 ①

CARING & PROFESSIONAL

Female 49, 5ft4, long hair, slim build, likes eating out, the beach, travel, seeks a friendly chap, 48-55. Hastings Box 417100 ①

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LOVELY BUBBLY

Short 51yr old professional lady, likes history, films and reading, seeking a genuine gent, 45-58, with GSOH to enjoy evenings out, stimulating conversations and fun. Box 452311 ①

FUNNY GIRL

Petite, blonde female, 51, GSOH, likes music, books, films, cooking, looking for romantic soulmate 45-55 for TLC. Kent. Box 835181 ① ②

YOU DON'T KNOW UNTIL YOU CALL...

Young-looking, hard-working 53yr old lady in East Sussex, giving a happy, caring person with a good sense of humour. Non-smoker. Heathfield. Box 883410 ①

MOVING ON

Blonde, blue-eyed solvent female, 54, home/car, young-looking, enjoys travel, dining out, conversation, swimming anything social! Seeking a like-minded man for a loving relationship. Eastbourne. Box 877161 ①

COMPANIONSHIP, LAUGHTER, HOPEFULLY MORE

Curvy & cuddly, outgoing, friendly, honest female, 53, 5ft7, larger build, fair hair, likes socialising, country walks, theatre, cinema, music, swimming. WLTm similar loving male. Box 443642 ①

TALL & SLIM

Sociable female, 54, tall & slim, short dark hair, green eyes, love gardening, walks, reading, visiting country pubs, dining out. WLTm a like-minded gent. Box 456504 ①

DO YOU HAVE THE BRAINS & THE LOOKS?

Professional, attractive female, 54, enjoys the countryside, gardening, keeping fit, reading and live music, looking to meet an attractive and intelligent man for a relationship. Box 448863 ① ②

GREETINGS!

Carry Lady, 56 seeking special genuine, fun loving gent, 50-60, to enjoy life with and share interests such as walking, cinema, theatre, dining out, holidays. Box 873039 ①

WALKS ALONG THE COAST

Honest & sincere female, 58, tall, GSOH, loves country pubs, coasts, cinema, seeking a man who's a match for me with GSOH for relationship. Box 441622 ①

DREAMS OF YOU

Genuine, caring lady, late 50s, slim & young looking, looking for a loyal, considerate, N/S male for long term relationship. Box 448566 ①

NEVER TOO LATE

Hello, I'm Betty, 62, cuddly widow, 5ft5, brown hair/brown eyes, GSOH and love life, seeking a like-minded gent for companionship and more. Box 452323 ①

TIME ON OUR HANDS

Hi I'm Maureen, 62, slim, 5ft2, short brown hair, never act like age! Love Motown, parks, beaches and homey life, seeks fun-loving gent. Tunbridge Wells. Box 458750 ①

LOTS OF TLC TO GIVE

Happy-go-lucky lady, 63, 5ft3, medium build, brown hair/eyes, likes dancing, walking and holidays abroad, looking for a like-minded male for friendship, maybe a LTR. Box 452897 ①

TALL ORDER

Attractive blonde, 60's, with a young outlook on life, slim build, likes animals, walking, meals, looking for a tall man for friendship, possible LTR. Hastings. Box 456604 ①

Women seeking men

YOU READY FOR THIS?

Tall, blonde lady, 43, 5'7", loves rock music and her dog, looking for a fun lady who has an adventurous side. Gillingham. Box 458471 ①

THE SWEETEST THING

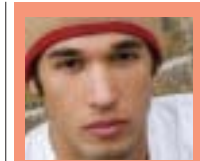
Hello there, I'm Heather, 46, kind and caring, looking for a similar soulmate. Seaford Box 454133 ①

NO SECRETS

Genuine, kind, reliable and caring lady, 46, looking for a lady who is exactly as she seems, honest and caring. Box 458390 ①

HOPE YOU'RE OUT THERE?

Sincere female, 49, likes football, animals, country pursuits, seeks feminine woman for friendship, maybe more. Gillingham Box 456805 ①



MEN seeking women

HAPPY CHAPPY

Hi I'm a happy-go-lucky man, 33, a plumber, I enjoy life and everything in it. I'm fit and active and seeking the same in a woman. Box 452394 ①

TABLE FOR 2?

Warm hearted and athletic looking man, 34, 5ft11, dark brown hair, brown eyes, looking for a strong friendship, possibly intimate relationship. Box 871685 ①

LOVE ME TENDER

Fun-loving honest guy, 34, 5ft11, brown hair, seeking honest, caring female for friendship, maybe leading to honest, tender relationship. Eastbourne. Box 446200 ① ②

BOTTLE OF WINE

Hi there, I'm an easygoing male, 35, 5ft9, medium build, brown hair. I'm based in Brighton and enjoy seeing friends, drinks, cinema, walks. Box 450165 ① ②

SOMEONE LIKE YOU

Nice upbeat male, 37, likes horse riding, cycling, social events; seeks similar person to meet for special connection. Tunbridge Wells. Box 458732 ①

DO I ATTRACT YOU?

Happy go lucky single dad, 40, looking for a slim female, -size 12, to share good times and happiness with. Hurlton Box 457738 ①

BROWN EYED DO

Love life, 44yr old male, blonde hair, blue eyes, easygoing nature, likes eating out, music, cinema etc, WLTm adventurous, witty, fit female for possible LTR. Box 432940 ①

IT'S WHAT'S INSIDE THAT COUNTS

MOTORS NEWS



Baby Land Rover given the green light to roll

LAND Rover has confirmed it will press the production button on its exciting LRX concept (pictured) – it goes on sale in 2011.

Billed as the “smallest, lightest and most efficient vehicle” LR has ever produced, it will slot in below the current Freelander and is tipped to offer greener technologies including a hybrid powertrain option. It will also guarantee the future of the newly-formed Jaguar Land Rover group's production plant at Halewood, Merseyside.



Hybrids can be fun as Peugeot aims to show

PEUGEOT is not only readying a diesel-electric hybrid for sale, but also pitching the idea that hybrids can be fun.

The type will debut in the French marque's new Nissan Qashqai-bashing 3008, launched initially in conventional mode next month, but the RCZ Coupé hybrid concept spin-off pictured here raises the pulse more than most hybrids.

It has 200bhp from electrically driven rear wheels and a diesel front end, yet averages nearly 80mpg and evades road tax with just 95g/km of CO2 emissions.



Focus wins again – this time as star used buy

BRITAIN'S best-selling motor has also won a major accolade from the influential What Car? Used Car of the Year 2009 awards.

The Ford Focus, in 1.6 Zetec Climate form, took the 'best small family car' title for its economy and reputation for reliability. The judging panel said: “There's good head and legroom in the front and back, and room for five people. The boot is a generous size and easy to load; fold down the rear seats and you can move masses of stuff.”



DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION: Launched in 2003, the current 5-Series styling remains controversial, however BMW's big seller handles beautifully and continues to tick the right boxes

BMW star continues to wear badge with pride

ROAD TEST BMW 5-SERIES

■ BY STEVE LOADER

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Green rating	★★★★★

when needed, while sipping fuel when driven sensibly, all helped by a beautifully weighted six-speed gearbox.

A mid-life facelift added some of BMW's EfficientDynamics technology; energy recovery from braking now tops-up the battery to prevent the alternator sapping engine power.

As usual, official fuel figures are optimistic, but averaging nearly 50mpg is not unreasonable unless you exploit the engine's low-mid range punch and amazing poise for such a big car (0-62mph in 8.3 seconds); balance and economy is helped by all-aluminium bodywork ahead of the windscreen. It will hustle along country lanes making about as much fuss as it does when quietly cruising motorways.

The cabin is spacious and typically well-arranged, if clinical, and now features a more user-friendly sounds/navigation/technology interface than on launch models.

Leather is a £1,340 'must have' extra to an otherwise attractive £27,430 price for an entry level 5-Series that is a long way from petrol 518i 'poverty spec' models of past generations, when snobby company car users would ask for the boot badge to be deleted from their order – '520d', on the other hand, may be worn with pride.



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Official Government Test Environmental Data - Fuel Consumption Figures mpg (litres/100km): Corsa SXi 1.3CDTi (75PS): urban 49.6 (5.7), extra-urban 74.3 (3.8) combined 62.8 (4.5). CO₂ Emissions 119g/km.

Model shown has optional metallic paint available at extra cost. 3 Years 0% Finance available with 20% minimum deposit. Finance by GMAC UK plc, applicants must be aged 18 or over. Finance offer available at participating retailers. UK supplied vehicles only. Guarantee/indemnity may be required. To be eligible for the Corsa Free Insurance offer Corsa SXi drivers must be aged between 19-80 and will need to have held a full UK/EU driving licence for at least 2 years. A compulsory excess of £250 will apply. Please note that additional excesses do apply in respect of young drivers and modifications. Vauxhall Motor Insurance is underwritten by Provident Insurance plc, authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. Free insurance in Northern Ireland, regulated by the Financial Regulator and obliged to comply with the ICOB rules issued by the Financial Services Authority. The free involuntary redundancy cover is optional and is offered to customers who take out a finance agreement with GMAC from a participating FSA authorised retailer. The cover, which is subject to eligibility, is for the first 24 months of the finance agreement (excluding the first 90 days, and is up to a maximum of 12 monthly payments). Terms and conditions apply (see Retailer for further details of cover). The insurance is provided by Finance Insurance Company Limited. Other providers of redundancy cover are available, for more information see www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk. £2000 Government Scrappage Allowance is dependent on the vehicle meeting the full Government Scrappage incentive criteria. The Government Scrappage payment applies to vehicles registered on or before 31.08.99 when traded in against a new car subject to conditions. All offers available to private individuals, Vauxhall Partners and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only). All other sales categories are excluded. Offers may not apply to all retailer stocks. Offers apply to selected new vehicles ordered or registered between 03.07.09 and 01.10.09, and are subject to status, eligibility, terms and conditions. (Vaux75619)

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AGILA								ZAFIRA							
08	58	Agila Club A/c	12	5	Steel Silver	4,385	7995	06	56	Zafira Active CDTi	19D	5	Silver lightening	38,860	8,995
08	58	Agila Design	12	5	Steel silver	5,300	7995	06	06*	Zafira Active CDTi	19D	5	Star Silver	79780	6995
08	58	Agila Design	12	5	Moroccan blue	6,441	7995	07	57	Zafira Design CDTi (120)	19D	5	Metro blue	16,820	11,995
08	58	Agila Club A/c CDTi	13D	5	Steel silver	6,450	8,995	08	58	Zafira Breeze CDTi Plus	19D	5	Metro blue	12,600	12,995
ASTRA								OTHER MAKES							
06	56	Astra VXR	2.0	3	Power red	12,675	12,995	04	54*	Mitsubishi colt equipe diesel	15	5	Silver	62670	4295
07	57	Astra Energy	1.4	5	Silver lightening	13,890	8,495	05	55	Citroen C2 design	11	3	Blue	30450	4495
08	08	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.6	3	Black sapphire	15,395	10,995	06	56	Citroen C3 Desire	1.4	5	Silver	34,510	6,495
08	08	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Black sapphire	15,890	9,495	DUE SOON							
08	58	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Green spirit	3,725	10,995	07	07	Astra Design CDTi	17D	5	Moonland	22,000	9,295
08	58	Astra Breeze Sports hatch	1.4	3	Black sapphire	3,100	10,495	07	57	Astra Elite	1.6	5	Ultra Blue	20,000	9,495
09	09	Astra Breeze CDTi	17D	5	Ultra blue	5,650	10,995	09	09	Zafira Sri XP CDTi	19D	5	Star silver	TBA	18,995
09	09	Astra Breeze CDTi	17D	5	Metro blue	4,720	10,995	09	09	Insignia Elite CDTi Auto (160)	19D	4	Black sapphire	TBA	22,995
CORSA								09	09	Insignia Sports Tourer Exclusiv (160)	19D	5	Panacotta	TBA	17,995
01	26	Corsa comfort auto	1.4	3	Star silver	69,350	3495	09	09	Insignia Sports Tourer Exclusiv (180)	19D	5	Silver lightening	TBA	17,995
04	04	Corsa Energy CDTi	13D	5	Spearmint silver	29,520	5,250	09	09	Tigra Exclusive	14	2	Antigua	TBA	13,995
04	54	Corsa Design	12	5	Star silver	38,180	4,995	06	56	Meriva Active	1.4	5	Star silver	30,000	6,995
06	55	Corsa Life	12	3	Misty grey	11,295	5,295	VANS							
06	06	Corsa Sxi Plus	12	3	Silver lightening	30,725	5,395	09	58	Astravan	17CDTi	Sportive	Star silver	1,750	£9,995
07	07	Corsa Life A/C	12	5	Misty Grey	14,150	7,495	06	56	Combo	13CDTi	Envoy	White	36,120	£5,495
07	57	Corsa Design	12	3	Air blue	21,575	7,795	07	07	Combo Crew van, PAS	13CDTi		White	8,700	£7,495
07	57	Corsa Design CDTi	14	5	Silver lightning	19,370	7,795	07	57	Movano LWB	250CDTi		White	10,300	£10,995
08	08	Corsa Breeze	12	3	Air blue	25,800	8,395	08	08	Movano MWB, Plylined	25CDTi		White	11,050	£10,495
08	58	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/c	13	5	Silver lightening	12,220	8,495	08	08	Movano LWB, Bulkhead, Plylined	25CDTi		White	6,460	£11,995
08	58	Corsa Design CDTi	13	3	Metro blue	12,775	9,995	08	58	Movano MWB H/R, Bulkhead, Plylined	25CDTi		White	14,050	£10,995
09	58	Corsa Sxi A/c	14	5	Metro blue	6,425	9,995	08	08	Vivaro Plylined, SWB	2.0CDTi		White	3,770	£8,795
09	58	New Corsa Sxi CDTi	13D	3	Star silver	11,390	9,850	09	09	Corsavan	13	Sportive	Silver	Delivery	£9,995
INSIGNIA								09	09	Astravan	17CDTi	Sportive	Silver	Delivery	£11,495
08	58	Insignia Sri (160)	2.0	5	Black sapphire	11,287	16,795	08	08	Vivaro SWB, 90BHP	2.0CDTi		White	Delivery	£9,995
09	58	Insignia Elite Auto Nav	2.0	5	Star silver	4,060	19,995	09	09	Vivaro	2.0D	LWB	White	TBA	£10,495
MERIVA								09	09	Vivaro	2.0	SWB	White	TBA	£9,995
07	07	Meriva Energy	1.4	5	Silver lightening	18,950	7,995	09	09	Vivaro LWB Double cab	2.0		White	TBA	£14,995
08	58	Meriva CDTi Breeze Plus	13	5	Black sapphire	10,930	10,995	COMPANY OWNED VEHICLES							
08	58	Meriva Life	14	5	Air blue	3,720	8,995	09	09	Agila Design Auto A/c	12	4	Sugar white	1,800	9,995
TIGRA								09	09	Agila Design	12	5	Moroccan blue	2,200	7,995
06	06	Tigra Exclusiv	1.4	2	Air blue	30,500	8,995	09	09	Agila Design	12	5	Lemon grass	1,200	7,995
VECTRA								09	09	Agila Design CDTi	13D	5	Atlanta blue	1,700	9,995
02	02*	Vectra SXi	1.8	4	Black Sapphire	52,900	2,995	09	09	Agila Design CDTi	13D	5	Steel silver	2,300	9,995
05	55	Vectra Sxi	1.8	5	Star silver	34,190	5,995	09	09	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/c	13	3	Black sapphire	2,200	10,495
06	06	Vectra elite CDTi (150)	19	5	Black Sapphire	38,125	9,495	09	09	Corsa Sxi CDTi A/c	13	3	Flame red	2,000	10,495
								09	09	Corsa Active	12	5	Silver lightening	3,350	9,995

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USED CAR ROUND-UP: OUR PICK FROM A KEY SECTOR

BRITAIN'S FAVOURITE SUPERMINIS

AS more people downsize their car, fuel and road tax bills, chances are that one or all of the following popular used superminis will be on their shopping list. Year in, year out they are the UK's most consistent best-sellers – a growing trend in the current economic climate. The trio are also excellent all-rounders, but a word of warning: second-hand car prices are robust at present so don't pay more than it would cost to keep your old car longer or trade up to a new car.

FORD FIESTA



FORD'S hugely successful supermini has marched on with a new model launched in late 2008, but don't expect weaker used prices; the credit crunch, rising fuel prices and draconian road taxes have made the Fiesta a top target for its reliability, decent driving experience, engines to suit all pockets and three and five-door body styles. Ford has also regularly produced special and limited editions laden with extra goodies, offering plenty more choice – there's even a hot ST model.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

RENAULT CLIO



DOWNSIZING can be sensible and chic with the Clio and the most recent generations have married durability and driving fun with Gallic charm. Again, the option of three or five doors is a big selling point, but our French contender also has the bonus of excellent diesel versions, though the cost of the actual fuel versus petrol argues against it currently. The Clio design has tended to be highly practical as well as charming, with good space for rear passengers.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

VAUXHALL CORSA



VAUXHALL'S Corsa was created to attack the Fiesta, yet has never quite achieved the volumes of its rival. Nevertheless, it offers similar virtues, plus a greater range of engines including a punchy and frugal three-cylinder petrol engine now in greater demand due to these straitened times. Several generations of Corsa followed a 'teardrop' body style, but the latest car is bigger and more aggressively sculpted – almost a 'supersize supermini' – with a sporty VXR version too.

STAR QUALITY

Driving appeal	★★★★★
Looks and image	★★★★★
Space	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★

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Pictures: STERILGARDIA DUCATI



FRUSTRATION: Shane Byrne was apologetic after a tough weekend at Imola

Factory bikes spoil Shakey's Italian job

SUPERBIKES

SHANE Byrne's frustrating season on the Sterilgarda Ducati bike continued at the weekend after the Sheppey rider was forced to retire in the first race at the meeting in Imola, Italy.

After qualifying eighth fastest, Byrne crashed after eight laps on the Tosca chicane in the first race and was forced to retire. He managed to put that behind him in race two where he finished seventh after a good start on the Imola circuit.

The 33-year-old climbed to fourth

place during the first laps and during the 21 laps, he duelled with Marco Simoncelli, Ben Spies and Jonathan Rea whom he fought until the end but eventually lost.

He finished the race battling with Rea's factory Honda, who was less than a second faster than him in sixth place.

A hugely frustrated Byrne said: "I'm sorry for race one. I really want-

ed to do well, especially for the team on their home track. That's why I was even more determined at the start of race two.

"I did climb a few positions but unfortunately the factory bikes were very strong and that's basically the reason I couldn't finish on top.

"Now we're going to Magny-Cours where we can definitely do well." Byrne remains in tenth place in the World Superbike Championship.

The next round in France is on Sunday.

Sheppey storm to biggest win so far

AFC Sheppey chalked up their biggest win of the season as they thrashed New Romney on Saturday.

Ben Stevens and Lenny Whiting were both on target in the 4-0 win to become the first team to beat New Romney this season.

It took Sheppey up to fifth in the County League Division One East ahead of Saturday's trip to winless Otford.

Sheerness East had a weekend off but return to action this weekend with a visit to APM.

Neither side has tasted victory so far this season, so both sides will fancy their chances of breaking their duck against a fellow struggling team.

Pictures: IGOR KUPCO



DEFEAT: Sittingbourne's winning streak was ended

End of winning run for Sittingbourne

SITTINGBOURNE RFC'S flawless start to the season came to a grinding halt as they crashed to defeat at previously pointless Vigo.

Scott Truss' side went into the game with maximum points from their first two games but came unstuck at Swanswood Field, losing 28-5.

Next up is a home game against rock bottom Erith on Saturday, October 10.

Sheppey were also on the receiving end on Saturday, going down 46-10 at home to Ashford.

They will hope to finally get their season up and running when they visit Cranbrook next month.

PLEASE SEND YOUR SPORTS STORIES TO SPORTS EDITOR GLENN PEARSON AT glenn.pearson@kosmedia.co.uk



STRIKE DUO: Dane Luchford (left) and Buster Smissen were on target as Faversham comfortably overcame Erith to consolidate their position as title challengers - whatever the gaffer says



Pictures: TONY GRAY

Luchford can't play down Town title hopes after this

FOOTBALL

■ BY GLENN PEARSON

Faversham Town 3

Hickman 54, Smissen 59, Luchford 65

Erith Town 0



Faversham Town starting XI



Subs used: Soutan (Sparks 65), Sinden (Smissen 75), Quain (Luchford 80)

DESPITE Justin Luchford's continued protestations that his side are not Kent League title challengers, favourites or any other way you want to put it, nine points in a week against Hythe, Herne Bay and Erith Town proves they are all of the above.

The Faversham boss is doing his bit to take the pressure off his side, and that's his prerogative as the club's manager, but underneath he is overjoyed that his team have taken nine points from games he singled out would be crucial before the season started.

He will also tell you that his aim is to finish with more points than last season and net a place in the top four, but I don't buy that and on the evidence of Wednesday night's mauling of Herne Bay - a side that had a previous 100 per cent record - he is massively undercooking his team's ability.

On Saturday, Town moved six points clear at the top of the Kent League and remain the only side in the division unbeaten after beating title contenders Erith Town.

The opening 45 minutes showed both sides

were well matched with clear cut chances thin on the ground with the best falling to Damian Abel, who saw a well struck effort fly narrowly wide of the goal.

Town defender Ashley Brown also went close with a clearance from inside his own half - the ball looked destined for the top corner of Erith keeper Jack Bradshaw's goal, and in running backwards at speed, he just managed to get his fingers to the ball before colliding with the upright sustaining a severe blow to the head.

A lengthy interval for treatment saw Bradshaw battle on until half-time before being replaced by Adam Highstead.

The second half saw the home side step it up a gear and taking the lead on 54 minutes. Brown's long throw from the left caused confu-

sion in the Docker's defence who failed to clear, allowing Town skipper Tom Hickman to fire home from six yards.

Five minutes later the Lilywhites doubled their advantage. Dale Skelton's through ball saw Buster Smissen one on one with Highstead and the Town striker rose highest to head the ball over the keeper into an empty net.

All three points were secured on 65 minutes when Dane Luchford's low driven shot found the bottom corner.

After as perfect a week as you can get in the Kent League, Luchford and his side can take a brief break from league action as the focus now turns to Saturday's FA Vase trip to face Sussex side Wick.

Brickies exit after cup comeback's left too late

FOOTBALL

BY GLENN PEARSON

Sittingbourne 2

Reeves 60, Akhazzan 90 + 2

Staines Town 3

Ifura 10, Onochie 58, Chaaban 85

A SPIRITED second half comeback from Sittingbourne was too little too late as they exited the FA Cup to Blue Square South side Staines Town.

After a non-descript first half in it was the Blue Square South side that were handed an early Christmas present.

A corner on the right from Howard Newton found Marien Ifura at the back post completely unmarked and the big centre-back had the easiest of tasks to head home.

Quite how the referee and his two assistants managed to miss Dominic Sterling's hand ball in the area on 22 minutes from a Sittingbourne cross was beyond everyone in the ground, and would have been interesting to see how they explained that to the referee invigilator sitting in the stands.

The home side were toothless in attack, largely down to their negative 4-5-1 formation, and it took 11 minutes into the second half before they registered their first shot on goal, when Matt



ON TARGET: Hicham Akhazzan netted a penalty deep in stoppage time but it wasn't enough to prevent defeat

Lovell hit a looping effort that just dipped wide of the post.

Staines extended their lead on 58 minutes when Andre Scarlett hit a shot from the edge of the area that was blocked but found its way to Eliot Onochie and the Town striker hit a clean strike across Deren Ibrahim and into the net.

Sittingbourne starting XI



Subs used: Neal (Lovell 66), Kayembe (Mannners 76)

The goal sparked the home side into life and from out of nowhere, they got themselves back into the game on the hour. Coin Richmond's right wing centre found Nick Reeves in space and the Sittingbourne centre-back headed across Louis Wells and into the bottom corner.

Home boss Gary Abbott went for broke in the final 20 minutes, bringing on strikers Jon Neal and Elie Kayembe, giving Sittingbourne some threat going forward.

A right wing run from Kayembe after 79 minutes forced a corner, and from the resulting set-piece Hicham Akhazzan flashed an effort just over the bar.

But it was the visitors who struck as they regained their two-goal lead with five minutes to go when a Howard Newton shot was blocked, only for Ali Chaaban to nonchalantly walk the ball in past a wrong-footed Ibrahim.

Sittingbourne managed a late consolation goal two minutes into stoppage time when Akhazzan scored a penalty after Ifura hauled Ashley Grant down in the box, but it was a case of too little too late.

FOOTBALL



FURIOUS: Gary Abbott says referee left him feeling cheated after Sittingbourne's FA Cup defeat

'Referee didn't want to talk because he knew he was wrong'

BRICKIES manager Gary Abbott was left fuming after the referee failed to inform anyone at Bourne Park of how much injury time he was going to allow.

Referees usually indicate to the linesman how much time will be added on but on Saturday he appeared to forget to do so, leaving Abbott less than impressed.

Sittingbourne scored two minutes after the allotted 90 to get themselves back into the game and just as they won a corner with their last attack, referee Wade Norcott called time.

The fact he missed a blatant handball in the area that everybody in the ground, including the referee's assessor sitting in the stands, clearly saw, added to the Sittingbourne manager's frustrations.

"I feel we have been cheated out of it a little bit," he said. "The referee has given us nothing, I tried to speak to him but he won't talk to me because he knows he is wrong."

"The linesman said there was some misunderstanding with the time being added on and then, with the penalty, he was saying he didn't know whose hand it was. Sometimes the linesman might as well not be out there, because they don't help the referee out."

Despite failing to have a single shot on goal in the first half and leaving it midway through the second half before pushing another striker up front, Abbott felt his use of a 4-5-1 formation was the right one on the day.

"We said at the start, let's keep it tight for the first 20 minutes and don't let them score, that was the plan, but their defender has come in and scored which was a bad goal to concede," he said.

"We thought that because it was only one goal, we would stick with what we had before going three up front. I think playing a team two divisions above us, we have given them a run for their money."

LEAGUE TABLES

(Not including midweek games)

RYMAN DIVISION ONE SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	Gd	Pt
1 Godalming Town	8	6	1	1	+9	19
2 Folkestone Invicta	8	5	2	1	+6	17
3 Merstham	9	5	1	3	-1	16
4 Croydon Athletic	7	4	2	1	+15	14
5 Chatham Town	8	4	1	3	-1	13
6 Walton & Hersham	6	3	3	0	+5	12
7 Corinthian-Casuals	8	3	3	2	+4	12
8 Fleet Town	8	3	2	3	+5	11
9 Dulwich Hamlet	8	3	2	3	+1	11
10 Metropolitan Police	8	2	4	2	+2	10
11 Burgess Hill Town	8	3	1	4	-1	10
12 Worthing	6	3	0	3	+1	9
13 Walton Casuals	7	2	3	2	0	9
14 Whyteleafe	8	3	0	5	-1	9
15 Ramsgate	9	2	3	4	-2	9
16 Leatherhead	7	2	2	3	0	8
17 Sittingbourne	6	2	2	2	0	8
18 Eastbourne Town	7	1	3	3	-4	6
19 Horsham YMCA	7	1	3	3	-7	6
20 Whitstable Town	6	2	0	4	-9	6
21 Ashford Town	7	1	2	4	-13	5
22 Chipstead	8	0	4	4	-9	4

KENT LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

1 Faversham Town	8	7	1	0	+16	22
2 Beckenham Town	7	5	1	1	+8	16
3 Herne Bay	7	5	0	2	+4	15
4 Greenwich Borough	8	3	3	2	+5	12
5 Erith & Belvedere	6	4	0	2	+3	12
6 Sevenoaks Town	5	2	2	1	+7	8
7 Hythe Town	4	2	1	1	+8	7
8 Holmesdale	6	2	1	3	+2	7
9 Erith Town	4	2	1	1	+2	7
10 Fisher	8	2	1	5	-8	7
11 Deal Town	5	2	0	3	-6	6
12 Sporting Bengal Utd	6	2	0	4	-12	6
13 Tunbridge Wells	5	1	2	2	0	5
14 Norton Sports	7	1	1	5	-6	4
15 Corinthian	4	0	1	3	-10	1
16 Lordswood	6	0	1	5	-13	1

FIXTURES (Saturday): FA Trophy Preliminary round: Sittingbourne v Wingate & Finchley. FA Vase First Round: Wick v Faversham Town Kent League Premier Division: Holmesdale v Norton Sports

Cable nets late on to ruin Norton's return to form

FOOTBALL

Norton Sports 0 Erith & Belvedere 1

NORTON'S mini revival came to an abrupt end at the weekend as they failed to score for the first time this season.

The visitors started the brighter of the two sides but despite having the lion's share of possession, they posed little threat to the Norton goal as player/manager Ben Taylor led by example.

As the half progressed, Norton began to impose themselves on the game as Harry Goodger was proving a handful and his flick-ons were causing problems.

On 20 minutes some good work by Goodger and Michael Green set up Ashley Baverstock, but the goalkeeper was out quickly to block the effort.

The rest of the half saw little in the way of goal mouth action, although Tony Clark will be disappointed he didn't do better from a narrow angle just before the break.

The second half started in the same way as the first with Erith having the greater possession, but home goalkeeper Chris Smith was not being stretched.

Norton created some opportunities but they lacked the killer instinct and failed to hit the target with several half chances.

They were finally undone after 75 minutes when a shot from the edge of the area was blocked but the ball dropped to Ross Cable. From a sharp angle he chipped the ball back goalwards and saw it float into the top corner.



HANDFUL: Harry Goodger's efforts failed to reap reward for Norton as they slipped to defeat

Norton pushed to get back into the game but struggled to make any headway against a determined Erith back four.

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